

# Getting Around

By ETHEL SIMMONS

## Jazz fills the riverfront

Jazz fans who work in downtown Detroit are finding it harder and harder to make that trek home, possibly to the suburbs, right after 5.

All because the jazziest things are happening in the Motor City. There's Chuck Muer's P-Jazz on Mondays and Wednesdays at the Hotel Pontchartrain; Jazz at the Institute on Thursday nights at the Detroit Institute of Arts.

And now there's Renaissance Live, an excitingly named concept to fill a summer's Tuesday night, against the breakfasting background of the towers of the Detroit Plaza Hotel and Renaissance Center.

On a recent Tuesday, Super Sax came to town from Los Angeles. The jazz sextet attracted a crowd of a couple thousand listeners to the outdoor rooftop area where the concert is held.

NO, IT'S NOT the roof on top of one of the towers, but the level just above the hotel's main-deck floor. Actually, the west podium deck accessible from the Ontario Level. You won't get vertigo seated (and there's loads of seating space) or standing in the spacious area.

Super Sax was more of a listening concert, in contrast to some rock concerts that have the audience up and dancing.

The spokesman for Super Sax called Detroit, "One of our favorite jazz towns." And he explained they had to catch a 10-40 p.m. plane but were "trying to get in as much jazz for you guys as I can."

When someone hollered, "Charter a plane," he retorted, "On this breed? You're bigger dreamers than we are." Debating whether there was time to play "Embraceable You" and then the closing number, "Salt Peanuts," he said, "If we're gonna catch that plane, we should just play 'Salt Peanuts' and get out of here." But then he decided the group would do "Embraceable You" first.

Although the rapport with the audience was casual, Super Sax did perform a mellow, lengthy set. This was preceded by the local Brookside Jazz Ensemble with vocalist Ursula Walker, who continued the show after Super Sax departed.

LAST TUESDAY, Renaissance Live presented jazz pianist Gap Mangione.

## Ferguson, Herman playing at P'Jazz

Looking forward, not back, has made Maynard Ferguson and Woody Herman two of the greatest jazz stars ever. P'Jazz audiences will see performances of Ferguson on Monday and Herman on Wednesday.

Both concerts begin at 6 p.m. on the poolside terrace of the Hotel Pontchartrain, across from Cobo Hall in downtown Detroit. Tickets will be available after 5 p.m. both nights.

Maynard Ferguson, who once said, "My prize word is 'adventure,'" was born in Quebec in 1928. He studied violin and piano at age 4, attended a Montreal music conservatory, and by 1950 was a name artist with Stan Kenton.

## 'Fantasticks' being staged

"The Fantasticks" musical comedy is being presented by the Theatre of the Arts at Mr. Mac's Stable in Dearborn's Parklane Towers, across Southfield from the Fairlane Town Center. Performances are staged Friday and Saturday following an 8 p.m. sit-down dinner.

"The Fantasticks" is the longest running musical in American theater history.



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with Brookside Jazz again on the bill. Coming up next Tuesday is rocker Freddy Cannon, along with Flashback, a Detroit '50s-rock-revival group.

The season's schedule continues with Freddie Hubbard, jazz trumpeter, on Aug. 15; jazz artist Earl Klugh on Aug. 22; and the Great Guitars of Barney Kestle, Herb Ellis and Charlie Byrd on Aug. 28.

Detroit Jazz Reunion, a jam session with Austin Moro, the Brookside Jazz Ensemble and other Detroit artists, will conclude the season Sept. 5. This concert will start at 4 p.m. and go on till 7.

Renaissance Live is co-sponsored by the Detroit Plaza and Nemo's Saloon in the RenCen. The concerts run 5-10 p.m., and drinks, hamburgers and oysters can be purchased during the concert. Tickets are available in advance or at the door.

ALL THE DIXIELAND bands and ragtime piano players in the Detroit area are getting together Sunday, beginning at 4:30 p.m., at the Sussex House in Southfield, to pay tribute to one of their own.

The night of joyful music will mourn Darrell (Ding) Bronson, who played tuba for Doug Jacobs' Red Garter Band in Detroit for 10 years.

Bronson died recently after suffering three brain aneurysms. Proceeds of the Dixieland night will be donated to Bronson's wife, "who needs money to get started again," according to Doug Jacobs. Band and musicians participating include Jacobs' band, Tom Seaburns Surf Side Six, Chet Bogen's Wolverine Jazz Band, Daiseyville Marching Band, the Ragtime Rascals, Cake Walking Jazz Band, and ragtime piano players Bob Milne, Bob Seelye, Mike Montgomery, Ragtime Betty, Trudy, and Karen.

Jacobs said Bronson joined the band at the age of 21. Bronson was on his way to New York to play at Your Father's Moustache night club but "He needed money and asked if I could use him at the Red Garter Nightclub for a few nights," Jacobs recalled.

After playing with the Red Garter Band, Bronson decided to stay on—for 10 years, until his untimely death.

Now an established jazz trumpeter and recording artist, Ferguson is no fan of nostalgia but combines today's rhythmic pulsation with the dynamics of jazz he helped popularize. Woody Herman, heading into his 42nd year of show business, is another jazz artist who has never stopped listening and picking up new ideas. He also scouts new talent at high schools and colleges where he plays many concert dates.

"I have a philosophy that's pretty corny, but it works," he said. "My best band is always my next one."

For information about P'Jazz concerts, telephone the ticket office at 955-0200, ext. 1755.

The dinner at Mr. Mac's Stable is a prime rib or Boston scrod with lobster sauce and is served complete with soup, salad, potato and a pastry selection for dessert.

Cocktails are served before the show and during intermission. Special group rates are available.

For reservations and further information, call the Theatre of the Arts at 649-0900.

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