

Charles Green Quartet honored at Piper's Alley

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but after a year I got bored. I finally dropped out and said 'forget it.' "I came to the conclusion that for a musician, or anyone in the arts for that matter, their degree of success depends on how good they are. It doesn't depend on a piece of paper.

"If you are a painter, a dancer or a piano player, the important thing is how well you do your work. Saying you have a degree doesn't guarantee you a job."

For brief periods, Green had theory and harmony teachers, but unlike many other jazz musicians, he has not had a particular mentor and he retains a strong pride in his individualism.

"I'VE DEVELOPED my own style of music — from listening to the right piano players and doing it myself. I appreciate my style more because I know that whatever degree of success I've attained locally has been on my own efforts. No one else has helped me and I've worked at avoiding being part of a clique."

"You hear or read about people going to Marcus Belgrave or Harold McKinney when they want to learn something about jazz. They're good friends, but I don't follow them around

saying, 'Hey, show me how to do this or that.' I'd rather get it on my own."

"Therefore, my music is not really directly influenced by anyone else. It's an invention of my own and has allowed me to have an independent sound."

Green's first paying jobs as a piano player were for weddings and dances. At age 17, he obtained a job in a bar on Woodward, Wilson Street in Detroit called the Star Silver Bar. This was followed by a job at a Fourteenth Street bar called the Strand. Eventually, things got better.

"The first club that gave me a chance to get my music together was the Blue Chip Bar on Six Mile. I worked there for about a year and that was when everything began to jell for me."

A YEAR LATER he went on the road for the first time, traveling with a singer named Bobby Dee to Rochester, N.Y., for a couple of months. Coming back to Detroit in the later 1960s, he worked in virtually every club in the metro area for the next seven years.

In 1975 he had a chance to go to England and he jumped at it. "That," he says, "was the time of my life."

For three months he backed Motown singer, Jimmy Ruffin, as they played

clubs in London, Birmingham, Manchester, Sheffield and other larger British cities. "I became a real anglophile on that trip," he recalls.

"As a child I used to read a lot and enjoyed Charles Dickens. I'd read 'David Copperfield,' 'Great Expectations' and 'Oliver Twist' and all of Dickens' works. When I was in England, I'd be out walking or doing some shopping and I would see these small, twisting streets that had been left intact for hundreds of years. They would conjure up images of Oliver Twist running through the streets of Victorian London. That was great. I loved that."

Since returning from his English tour, he has played two years as the Monday night entertainment at Dummy George's, a Detroit jazz club, and now a year at Piper's Alley. Before he started the Piper's Alley job, Green was on the road backing the Spinners as they played Trinidad and the Virgin Islands for 45 days. He fell in love with those locales also.

"Wherever I travel, I fall in love with that place. I always say to myself, 'I want to live here.' But, I always end up back in Detroit. This is home."

Besides his brother and parents, home includes a wife and three active boys, aged 3 1/2, 2 and 2 months.



Cocktail time

In a scene from the comedy "Any Wednesday" by Muriel Resnik are (from left) Dolores Shevlin of Farmington, Kay Grismer of Livonia, Joe Lannen of Livonia, and the show's star, WJBK-TV's Vic Caputo of Grosse Pointe. The four are appearing at the Paradise Dinner Theatre, 17600 Woodward, Detroit. Edgar A. Guest II of Birmingham is directing the production by Nancy Gurwin of Southfield. Show times are Friday and Saturday, with dinner at 7 p.m. followed by the play at 8:30. For reservations, call 869-3988.

Excursion hears sounds of Sousa

The Southeastern Michigan Transportation Authority (SEMTA) will offer two commuter trains from Pontiac to Detroit's riverfront for the fourth annual Hudson's-Sirois's Fireworks Display on Friday, June 29.

In the event of inclement weather, the commuter trains will operate Saturday, June 30.

The first "Firecracker Special" will

leave Pontiac at 7:30 p.m. and arrive at Detroit's Renaissance Center at 8:30 p.m. The second "Firecracker Special" will leave Pontiac at 8 p.m. and arrive at Renaissance Center at 9 p.m.

Both trains will stop at the Bloomfield Hills, Birmingham and Royal Oak-Eleven Mile Road commuter rail

train stations.

THE FIREWORKS display is scheduled to begin at 9:55 p.m. The trains will depart from the riverfront 25 minutes and 45 minutes after the fireworks. Passengers must return on the same train they arrive on. Free parking will be available at all train boarding stations.

Trip features Sousa Concert

"The Recreation of Sousa," a festive pre-holiday concert, is scheduled for Sunday, July 1, at 7:30 p.m. at Meadow Brook Music Festival near Rochester. A limited number of tickets are still available for this concert at The Community House, which is offering round-

trip transportation from Birmingham along with reserved pavilion seating. In addition to the music of John Philip Sousa, the evening will include the Meadow Brook Estate, a show ensemble that presents a fast-paced, colorful show featuring young singer-dancers

and instrumentalists. The musical revue includes pop, jazz, country and western, and Broadway show tunes. A gigantic fireworks display will top off the evening. Call The Community House at 644-5832 for further information.

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