

Entertainment

Ethel Simmons editor/644-1100



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Pullin records pop rock, new sound

Livonia native Joey Pullin was singing songs before he could walk. By high school, he was playing guitar in a schoolkids' dance band called Possessions.

Later, he kicked around with other bands — Lovelight, Flaming Embers, Elephant — while waiting for the break that would let him make music his full-time business.

In the meantime, Joey got a bachelor's degree in marketing from Eastern Michigan University and worked in an ad agency. But the dream for a career in music never died.

It's not 1969 any longer and Joey Pullin is no idealistic kid either. But at 28, he's formed another band (Joey Pullin and the Mistles) and hustled enough money to put out an album.

Called "Give Me Tonight," the new album reflects the years of knocking around and the kinds of musical skills that can be honed.

"Give Me Tonight" is pop rock with the new sound along with it," said Pullin, whose band made a recent appearance on the WJBK-TV show "Stars of Tomorrow."

Album production is by John Repp, tour director for Bob Seger and the Silver Bullet Band. "Give Me Tonight" was recorded at Rodford's Multi Track Studios and features five original tunes that have pop sensibilities and a contemporary sound.

Joey and the Mistles will be making a late-April appearance at the Eastown Theatre, and local rock stations have received his album. With some luck some of these stations will play it.

CHARLES ROWLAND doesn't have a hit record. I don't even know if he's ever recorded an album under his own name. But Rowland has played the piano around the area for a number of years and always played it well.

Last summer he played with the Shoe Bee Doo band that opened for Tanla Maria at the Montreux-Detroit Kool Jazz Festival.

He's best known for his club dates, and at present he can be enjoyed nightly in the lounge at Win Schuler's on Maple Road in West Bloomfield. "Don't call me a jazz pianist," Rowland admonished me one night recently after one of his typical sets that made me think of other well-known jazz pianists.

"Jazz pianists don't draw people," he said. "Just call me a pianist."

CORNETIST TOM SAUNDERS has his band Surf Side Six at a place that those of us north of the Detroit River can travel to without packing a lunch. For the last 12 years, Saunders and his Dixieland band were the house band at the Presidential Inn in Southgate.

Now it's at Poseidon's Place, 1019



on music
James Windell

Maple Road, Clawson, for an extended stay. "It's really the first time we've ever booked the band on a steady basis in Oakland County," said Saunders.

Saunders' specialty has always been Dixieland jazz and he's one of the most talented producers in the metro-Detroit area. This is confirmed on his various recordings (his most recent album is "The Feeling of Jazz") and by his various appearances in Europe and around this country. Frequently such stellar jazz artists as Wild Bill Davison and Bobby Hackett have sat in with him, and he's recorded with Davison.

The Surf Side Six can be heard at 8:30 p.m. Tuesdays-Saturdays at Poseidon's Place, a restaurant at one time called the Pagoda. For more information, call 435-4242.

WHEN I TALKED with Tom Saunders, the conversation turned to other musicians — like Bob Wilbur, who's director of the Jazz Repertory Ensemble. Wilbur is a clarinetist and soprano saxophonist who came to jazz through study with the great New Orleans musician Sidney Bechet.

"That's an excellent group because I've heard them," Saunders said. "Bob is also an excellent arranger and it will be a treat to have him in town."

Sure enough, Wilbur's Jazz Repertory Ensemble will be at Orchestra Hall on Saturday, April 7, when it shows

how versatile it can be, playing the music of Jelly Roll Morton, Bix Beiderbecke, Duke Ellington, Fats Waller and even such modern giants as Thelonious Monk and Charlie Parker with fire and enthusiasm.

The ensemble is being brought to town for this one performance by Brethern Productions and it's a chance to catch a group of musicians who are invaluable at preserving and enhancing an important jazz tradition.

For more information, call 271-4360 or 833-3700.

THERE'S ANOTHER tradition that needs to be carried on. That's the yearly spring concert by the Brookside Jazz Ensemble at Cranbrook Schools' Performing Arts Center in Bloomfield Hills.

The Brookside Jazz Ensemble, under the direction of Kurt Neumann and Craig Sirain, has been practicing weekly at Cranbrook's Brookside School for at least a decade. Each spring the band returns the favor by performing a concert.

The music is always first-rate, the musicians excellent and the musical affair casual, relaxed and a great way to spend a Sunday afternoon at a time of year when the driving sounds of a well-rehearsed big band are welcome relief from the snow and winter chill.

This year's concert is at 3 p.m. Sunday, and as usual one of the special guests will be singer Ursula Walker. For more information or tickets, call 353-2440 or 645-3500.



Tom Saunders plays the cornet with his group, the Surf Side Six, at Poseidon's Place in Clawson.

He was at Meadow Brook Music Festival last summer to open for Bob James but since has garnered two Grammys for a jazz and a classical album, which is the first time that's ever occurred. You can take a look at the rising young talent in person when he appears with his band in Royal Oak. It might be something you'll tell your grandchildren about someday.

GRAMMY AWARD winner and young trumpet superstar Wynton Marsalis returns to the area at 7:30 p.m. Friday, April 13, for a show at the Royal Oak Music Theatre.

'Jazz pianists don't draw people. Just call me a pianist.'

— Charles Rowland

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