

# Cabaret star Bobby Short plays at mall



By Ethel Simmons  
staff writer

"Quite a different venue!" Bobby Short exclaimed, beaming in suits facton, amid the hubbub of activity all around him.

He was signing autographs at the side of the temporary stage, where he had just finished performing two lively sets with his sidemen, on acoustic bass and drums.

Short was the star attraction at "Masterpiece Evening," a grand opening gala at the elegant, new Laurel Park Place mall in Livonia. The evening, which also included five buffet tables and a fashion show, was a benefit for the Auxiliaries of the Fordham Society Detroit Institute of Arts.

Some of his audience at the mall was seated in folding chairs set up in front of the stage, and other partygoers listened from tables and chairs dotting the mall interior, where they sipped drinks and nibbled international snacks (American, English, Greek, Japanese and French). Still more guests listened standing or walking nearby.

Earlier that afternoon Short met with the media at a press conference at the Marriott Hotel in the shopping mall complex. The famous singer-pianist is known for his individualized interpretations of classics by Cole Porter and other sophisticated songwriters.

FOR 21 YEARS, Short has been performing at the Cafe Carlyle in

New York, where he has regular gigs, performing 19 weeks a year. He returned to the Carlyle this week and will be there through 1990, returning next May and June. "Thanksgiving night, I have always worked," he said. "I often find three generations at one table."

Short also goes on the road a lot. His appearance at Laurel Park Place was his third visit to metropolitan Detroit this year. He performed with the Detroit Symphony for three nights last January and at a private party for a golf tournament last spring.

The personable entertainer speaks in a colorful manner, his words flowing easily and expressively. Describing his longtime performing appeal, he said, "I do it with a lot of pizzazz and a lot of energy. My energy seems to go on any one, although there are some nights I feel I couldn't do it one more time."

He started his career as a 10-year-old in vaudeville, with the Big Apple Dancers, and played Detroit's Fox Theatre in 1937. Although cabaretgoers are still smitten with Short, he declared easily, "I've been around so long now I wouldn't dare say I was a thrill of the moment."

Short's autobiography, "Black and White Baby," already has been published, and he is working on a continuation of his life story in "Saloons." He also is planning a book of essays about black women on stage, telling about such glittering stars as Josephine Baker.

Bobby Short, who has entertained at the Cafe Carlyle in New York for 21 years, was the main attraction at a benefit party for

the Detroit Institute of Arts, part of the grand opening events at Laurel Park Place in Livonia.

JIM JAGOFFEL/Staff photographer



A receptive audience applauds during set played by Bobby Short and his two side men.

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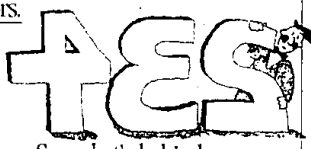


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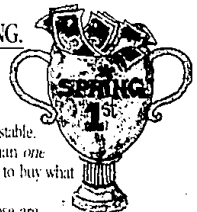
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