



March 2007

Edited by Dick Parker and Jim Torok

Coda is the e-mail supplement to the Twin Cities Jazz Society *JazzNotes*. *Coda*, emailed by the first of each month, contains items too new or lengthy for the printed version of *JazzNotes*, and is available free to all TCJS members who give us their email address. Readers are encouraged to submit CD reviews, news items and articles to torok001@umn.edu.

Please e-mail *Coda* as an attachment to friends who might be interested in joining the Twin Cities Jazz Society. They can send an e-mail to tcjsnews@usinternet.com or call (763) 862-5694.

BOOK REVIEW

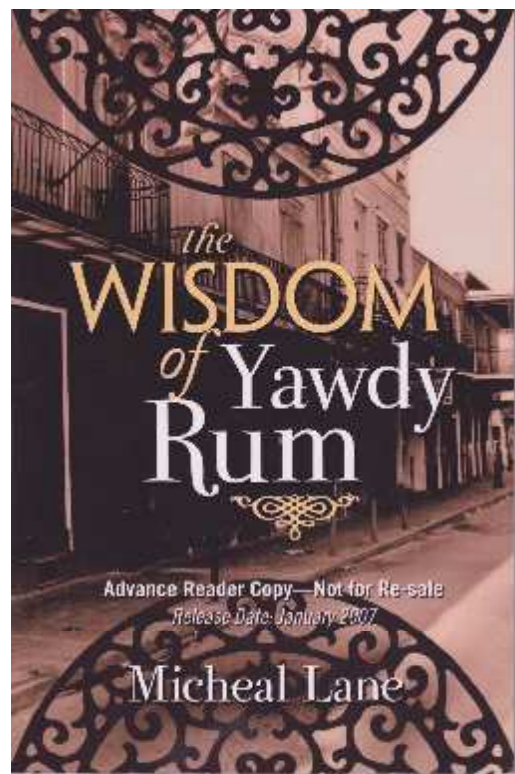
The Wisdom of Yawdy Rum

by Michael Lane

Reviewed by Jim Torok

This book is a work of fiction, and thus would not normally be reviewed in *Coda*. However, most of the book is about the jazz musicians who play in Preservation Hall in New Orleans, and the book is both fascinating and engaging. The musicians are fictional, but they show the kindness and friendliness found in many real Preservation Hall jazzmen.

The author puts himself into the book: An upper-level executive of Cargill Salt Division of Cargill Corporation in the Twin Cities is required to travel a great deal to various locations including New Orleans. He is learning to play guitar and carries a guitar with him when he travels. He meets Yawdy Rum, an 81-year-old clarinet player in the Preservation Hall group, on an airliner. They become friends. Yawdy teaches him to play jazz better, gives



him advice about life, and takes him to Preservation Hall. Some quotes:

"You know, we can all learn something from jazz...First, things don't start off complicated; we make them that way over time. Second, life is supposed to be fun. And third, if you love what you're doing, you never get tired of it."....

"Mister Mike, we all got a different place to play in the band, and we sure do need the others, don't we?" ...

"Yawdy, how would you explain jazz at its most basic level. Would that be New Orleans Jazz?"

"I'd say so. To me, jazz is spiritual. It's about the rhythm of life. It's about the creative energy that flows through all of us."

"But it's still more than that, isn't it?"

“You know, we can all learn something from jazz. ...First, things don't start off complicated; we make them that way over time. Second, life is supposed to be fun. And third, if you love what you're doing, you never get tired of it.”

"Well sure. There's the whole musical technique side of it. If you are goin' to understand jazz, you need to know a little about music theory, the way harmony works, rhythm, improvisation, instrument technique, and things like that."

"But some musicians play totally by ear, right?"

"Sure, and they're darn good, too. But to really know what's goin' on, you need the technical side as well."...

Yawdy showed Mike Congo Square. "The slaves who lived in New Orleans gathered here. New Orleans afforded them a bit greater level of tolerance and freedom than any other location in the South." ... He continued, "And they danced. Some say an African line dance called the Calinda and the Bamboula. ... I believe it was more the creative energy that brought jazz to life. I heard this anthropologist

one time givin' a talk on the subject. He used the term 'syncretism'. I think it means the blandin' together of two cultures" ...There were French, Spanish, English, Acadians, and Native Americans all here together. Just look around, the ethnic diversity is still here"

"And you're saying, with it a greater level of tolerance, to explore and create."

Yawdy looked at me straight on. Some call it the Africanization of American music and the Americanization of African music. I believe it was a blandin' of the discipline of European musical structure with the free form of native African music. Jazz is the embodiment of the creative energy that began with the slave dances that happened here where we are standin'. And it happened here because of the tolerance that existed. Multi-cultural tolerance and respect to a point. You have to remember they were still slaves."

"I'm hearing you describe this emotion-driven, boiling cauldron of humanity mixing with the steamy atmosphere of New Orleans, coming together in a way unlike any other place on the planet."

"Bingo."...

"Yawdy, I could make a comparison between business and jazz."

"How's that?"

"Well, some employees are more spontaneous than others, more likely to go against the flow or challenge the direction in which the business is moving."..."Some managers have hell of a time with that"...

"I think you were sayin' improvisation was a good thing."

"Oh, yeah. I'm saying that the total outcome is better because you allow everyone to express their individuality."...

"I think, for whatever reason, the corporate world has a hard time with improvisation."

"Probably scares 'em," he added.

In the course of this novel, Mike, the salt executive, loses his job because of a personality conflict with his bosses. He is caught in New Orleans during the Katrina disaster, and he and Yawdy weather the hurricane by staying in Preservation Hall. Yawdy manages to save his clarinet as well as an old cornet that an ancestor won in a card game. After the hurricane, Mike becomes a successful motivational speaker and can spend more time with his family. Yawdy sells the cornet, which once belonged to Buddy Bolden, for three million dollars and gives all the money to the hurricane relief fund.

The author, Michael Lane, acknowledges the help of various Twin Cities musicians who helped further his understanding of traditional jazz, and who took time to read the original manuscript and provide feedback. They include Tony Balluff, Dr. Henry Blackburn, Charlie DeVore and Irv Williams.

Book signings

<u>Date</u>	<u>City</u>	<u>Venue</u>	<u>Time</u>
March 7	Minnetonka, MN	Barnes & Noble Ridgedale	7:00 p.m.
March 20	Excelsior, MN	Excelsior Bay Books	7:00 p.m.
March 24	New Orleans, LA	Legends Park	2:00 p.m.
March 25	New Orleans, LA	Preservation Hall	2:00 p.m.
April 12	Wayzata, MN	Bookcase of Wayzata	7:00 p.m.
April 14	St Paul, MN	Micawber's Books	3:00 p.m.
*April 29	Hopkins, MN	Mainstreet Bar & Grill	5:00 p.m.

*Special appearance with the Mouldy Figs. During this event, 100 percent of the proceeds from book sales will be donated to the New Orleans Musicians Hurricane Relief Fund and the New Orleans Habitat for Humanity.

Library, MacPhail present “America’s Art Form”

Music lovers are invited to take a deeper look at - and then listen to - jazz through a six-part series sponsored by the Minneapolis Public Library and MacPhail Center for Music. "Looking At: Jazz, America's Art Form" will explore the musical, cultural and social history of jazz - from its roots in New Orleans-style rags and marches to bebop, from swing and cool to Latin jazz. Programs will include a film-clip presentation and discussion led by trumpeter Kelly Rossum, jazz coordinator at MacPhail, followed by a live performance by regional musicians.

The schedule:

Program Kick-off, March 9, noon

Barnes & Noble Nicollet Mall, 801 Nicollet Mall
Performance by Greg Theisen and Kelly Rossum

New Orleans and the Origin of Jazz, March 10, 1 pm

Central Library, 300 Nicollet Mall
1 pm program, 2 pm concert with Theisen and Rossum

The Jazz Age and the Harlem Renaissance, March 24, 1 pm

Central Library
1 pm program, 2 pm concert with MacPhail Faculty Jazz Ensemble

The Jazz Vocalists, April 5, 7 pm

MacPhail Center for Music, 1128 LaSalle Avenue
7 pm program, 8 pm concert with Connie Evingson, Winner of the 2005-2006 McKnight Artist Fellowships for Performing Musicians administered by MacPhail Center for Music

The Swing Era, April 21, 1 pm

Central Library
1 pm program, 2 pm concert with Dean Brewington Quartet

Jazz Innovators: From Bebop to Hard Bop to Cool and More, May 10, 7 pm

Central Library
7 pm program, 8 pm concert with Kelly Rossum Quartet

Latin Jazz and Jazz as an International Music, May 17, 7 pm

Central Library
7 pm program, 8 pm concert with Nachito Herrera

EXTRA: What Is Jazz? March 17, 2-4 pm

Central Library
Discovery Saturday Program for children ages 5-12
Using percussion, bass and voice, Joan Griffith and Ruth MacKenzie trace the history of jazz from field songs and spirituals to rap and jam.

EXTRA: Performances May 11 and 12, 9 pm

Artists' Quarter, 408 St. Peter St., St. Paul, with Kelly Rossum Quartet

EXTRA: Performances May 18 and 19, 8 pm

Dakota Jazz Club, 1010 Nicollet Mall, with Nachito Herrera

Kurt Elling returns to the Dakota March 19-20

By Andrea Canter

Elastic vocalist Kurt Elling is six for six—six recordings, six Grammy nominations. Arguably the most inventive of male jazz singers and lyricists of his—or perhaps any—generation, Elling will return with his quartet (pianist Lawrence Hobgood, bassist Rob Amster, and drummer Willie Jones) to the Dakota in downtown Minneapolis March 19-20. Elling's local visit will shortly follow the release of a new recording (*Night Moves*), on the Concord label, featuring a long list of guest artists and new arrangements, including original lyrics by Elling.



With a string of hit recordings and Vocalist of the Year decrees from *DownBeat* and others, Elling could easily ride on his high tide of acclaim. But that's not his style. As intense and cerebral as he is poetic and engaging, Elling is a master of improvisation, both vocal and literary, twisting covers such as Guess Who's "Undun" and "Detour Ahead" and inventing lyrics to unsung gems from Grolnick ("Nighttown") and Coltrane ("Resolution").

Elling's father was a church musician, and playing instruments and singing was just a natural part of growing up. Although he never formally studied music, young Kurt participated extensively in choral music through high school and college. But it wasn't until college at Gustavus Adolphus in Minnesota that he was initially turned on to jazz, hearing records of Herbie Hancock, Dexter Gordon, Dave Brubeck and more in his dorm. He performed during his college days, attracting audiences with his scatting, which at that time was not very familiar with Midwestern small-town audiences. Still, he was not really thinking of singing as his career, and he headed to the University of Chicago for graduate studies in Divinity. Notes Elling, "I was not there to become a priest but an academic — a professor. That having been said, I was there to try to answer deep-level questions of meaning that were gnawing at me.... Graduate school sharpened my mind, my analytic and my writing skills. It gave me the tools to root around in questions of meaning." Citing as key influences Mark Murphy, John Hendricks and Frank Sinatra, Elling is best known for his scat, vocalese, and a variant informally known as "rant." Says Elling, "Ranting is an informal term a friend of mine came up with for improvised melodies coupled with improvised lyrics. Sometimes there is no melody — just an improvised story or 'open thought process.'" Elling describes his first impromptu effort at ranting: "I was doing wedding band things.... On these gigs, we'd be in the middle of 'Isn't it Romantic' or something like that, and the leader would come up while I was



singing and say in my ear, ‘Tell them that they’re going to cut the cake now,’ or ‘five minutes to the bouquet toss.’ So instead of stopping singing, I’d just start making up the announcement in song, often trying to rhyme the lyrics and sometimes making up little stories to go with it, singing

all the while over the changes.”

Why is Elling special? Because he can hold a note forever, and yet it never seems too long nor does it waver off the mark. Because his unique phrasing makes even familiar standards such as “April in Paris” memorable. Because his classical training is never too far removed, even from covers of Horace Silver or John Coltrane. Because his arrangements have shapes as exquisite as their sounds (e.g., Curtis Lundy’s “Orange Blossom”). Because he is the musical equivalent of a gold medal Olympian gymnast, “leaping octaves in a single bound” (Pamela Espeland, *Jazz Police*), shifting meters as well as dynamics and pitch as if it is all a ball of vocal Silly Putty. Because he has the ultimate control of his own instrument — his voice, sliding up and down like a melodic Slinky toy, splattering rounds of notes like machine-gun fire, filling space like a horn soloist.

Any night with Kurt Elling is a special occasion. In the Twin Cities, those nights will be March 19th and 20th at 7 and 9 pm, live at the Dakota (www.dakotacooks.com).

Jazz at Normandale Community College

By Aaron Moe

While attending the IAJE meeting at the Minnesota Music Educators clinic in Minneapolis last month, I had the pleasure to meet Vicci Johnson, Education Chair for the Twin Cities Jazz Society. After I shared a little about myself and my job, she asked if I might be interested in writing some of that information in the form of an article for the TCJS publication, which I thought to be an opportunity too good to refuse.

An introduction:

A native of Minnesota, I grew up in Apple Valley and attended Rosemount High School as a clarinet and saxophone player. After several years in a great school district, I decided I, too, wanted to be a high school band director, which brought me to the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point as a music education major. I began my career as a high school jazz director at Valley High School in West Des Moines, Iowa. Two years later I began work on a master of music in jazz studies and pedagogy at Northern Illinois University in DeKalb, Ill., under the tutelage of Ron Carter and Joey Sellers. Upon graduation I accepted the position of Director of Jazz Performance Studies at the University of Missouri-Columbia.

While at Mizzou in the fall of 2004, I noticed a job posting for a jazz director at Normandale Community College in Bloomington. Although I knew very little about the school, I was excited at the prospect of living in the Twin Cities once again and would later find the opportunity was coupled with the chance to custom-design and implement a jazz curriculum, a rare gem for educators, as the college recently had committed to support this new component of the Music Department. In addition to my work as a jazz educator and clinician, over the past several years I have enjoyed writing for big band and an eight-piece group based in Chicago. Additionally, I have had the opportunity to perform with or behind artists such as Frank Wess, Randy Brecker, Bluiett, Wynton Marsalis Septet, and many others.

As is the case with all musicians, I have had many influences in my ongoing development as a musician and teacher, however, none have affected me in as dramatic a fashion as NIU professors Carter and Sellers. Both left significant lasting impressions in very different ways.

Ron Carter is a master educator who has a unique ability to bring the concept of swing to young players by equally emphasizing the importance of groove and the aural tradition in jazz. Carter left an amazing legacy at Lincoln High School in East St. Louis, Ill., fostering aspiring jazz musicians such as Terreon Gully (drummer with Stefan Harris), Tony Suggs (Verve recording artist/pianist with the Count Basie Orchestra), Reggie Thomas (piano recording artist/jazz faculty at Southern Illinois University-Edwardsville) and Russell Gunn (trumpet recording artist). In addition to his work at NIU, he currently serves as vice president of the International Association for Jazz Education as well as an education consultant to Jazz @ Lincoln Center.

Joey Sellers, easily one of the most inspiring and creative musicians I have ever had the pleasure to meet, is an internationally renowned composer and trombonist. It was Joey who impressed upon me the importance of composition and the necessity for musicians

of all styles to engage in this rewarding art. As testament to his ability, Sellers has won the Sammy Nestico Award, The Gil Evans Fellowship in Jazz, and the Julius Hemphill Composition Award, among others. Sellers' work can be heard as recorded by the Airmen of Note and Joey Sellers' Jazz Aggregation, an 11-piece ensemble dedicated to performing his music. Some of his charts are available for purchase through UNC Jazz Press.

Which brings me to Normandale Community College.

I have been blessed beyond words to work in the place I do. My colleagues are of the highest caliber, recognized as among the best in their respective areas, and completely devoted to the growing number of students enrolled in the music program. Though I have been intimately involved in higher education for many years in several capacities, I am continually amazed by what happens at this school and can say without hesitation, this is not your average college. The quality of the fine arts faculty is truly remarkable and on par with what I have seen at other exceptional institutions. The administrative encouragement and support for artistic development, student achievement, special events, and community outreach is unparalleled in every way. One very recent demonstration of the commitment to artistic growth was a clinic by Matt Wilson's Arts and Crafts jazz quartet on February 1. The clinic, which was free and open to the public, was sponsored by the Music Department and the office of the Dean of Humanities and College Readiness. It is because of these many positive forces that some exciting changes have been occurring at Normandale, and in quick succession.

In the past five years, the Normandale Music Department has undergone a significant transformation that includes: full accreditation by the National Association of Schools of Music (NASM), the governing body which oversees all music schools within the United States; the implementation of an Associate of Fine Arts degree in music, art, and theatre; the addition of a full-time jazz director, bringing total full-time music faculty to four; creation of a jazz component within the music curriculum; the addition of a staff accompanist; the addition of a College Lab Assistant to aid in the operation and further development of the music computer lab; the approval and imminent groundbreaking for a Fine Arts construction and renovation project.

In order to create a jazz studies program at the college, there have been many issues to address. The first order of business was to reinstate the jazz ensemble and bring it into the existing music curriculum. Although the school has had an ensemble in the past, it met in the evening without the option for credit. It now rehearses every Tuesday and Thursday from 1:00-2:20 p.m. and participants can register for one credit. After only one year, the response from students and community musicians has been so strong that a jazz combo course has been added to the curriculum for one credit. Currently there are three combos and one big band.

All successful jazz studies programs have excellent ensembles, but they also have a variety of offerings intended to augment the performance opportunities. Although on the books, the jazz history course had not been offered in years. Since reemerging, the class has filled quickly and a second section has been opened. New to the music curriculum is a sequence of two courses in jazz improvisation, which cover everything from fundamentals, the blues, and basic ii-V patterns to ballads, Coltrane, and free playing.

Perhaps the biggest news, literally, is the Fine Arts construction and renovation project that is scheduled to break ground in April and will include updates to the facilities for Art, Theatre, and Music. The Music Department is excited to announce the project will include the addition of a music computer lab, with 15 stations consisting of a MIDI keyboard controller and computer to be used for classes in music theory, fundamentals of music, jazz improvisation and other applications such as SmartMusic. The lab will also feature a small recording studio for use by students enrolled in music courses to learn basic recording skills as well as a method for documentation and critique their musical development at Normandale.

Though still in development, there are several projects that will likely come to fruition in the near future. One of these projects is a jazz workshop at Normandale for local middle and high school ensembles. The goal is to bring young jazz musicians and professional jazz educators to campus in a format where each ensemble will receive an individual clinic, all participants break off into master-class clinics on their respective instruments, and students have the opportunity to hear professionals play live. In addition to the jazz workshop, there is also a unique opportunity involving jazz commissions and a publishing partnership, details of which will be announced later.

As the enrollment in the program continues to grow, the course offerings will expand to accommodate the increased demand. As of today, a student entering Normandale as a music major can complete the first two years of a degree in music education or performance, receive an Associate of Arts in music (AA) or an Associate of Fine Arts in music (AFA) and transfer to most Minnesota state colleges and universities as a junior. The Normandale Music Department has an articulation agreement with Minnesota State University-Mankato and pending agreements with three additional institutions. An articulation agreement is essentially a guarantee that credits will transfer between two institutions. At nearly every receiving institution, transferring music students will be required to audition before being accepted to the music program.

As suggested by our name, Normandale Community College welcomes and includes students of all ages and backgrounds. If you have any interest in participating in music at Normandale or questions regarding what the Music Department, please contact Aaron Moe at (952) 487-7279 (aaron.moe@normandale.edu) or Marc Jaros at (952) 487-8340 (marc.jaros@normandale.edu).

Normandale concert schedule

All concerts are in the Auditorium, within the Fine Arts Building (F1265), at no charge. (Please submit all requests for persons with disabilities at least 72 hours before the event by calling 952-487-7037.)

Friday, March 9, 7:30 p.m. - Band and Choir

Thursday, March 15 (Call for time) - Composer Day

Tuesday, April 20, 2:30 pm - Chamber Ensemble Recital

Tuesday, May 1, 7:30 pm - Band and Choir

Friday, May 4, 7:30 pm - Jazz Ensemble

Classical ballet meets classical jazz

The Saint Paul City Ballet and George Maurer Jazz Group present the world premiere of *Enticed*, music by George Maurer and choreography by Christa Hill.

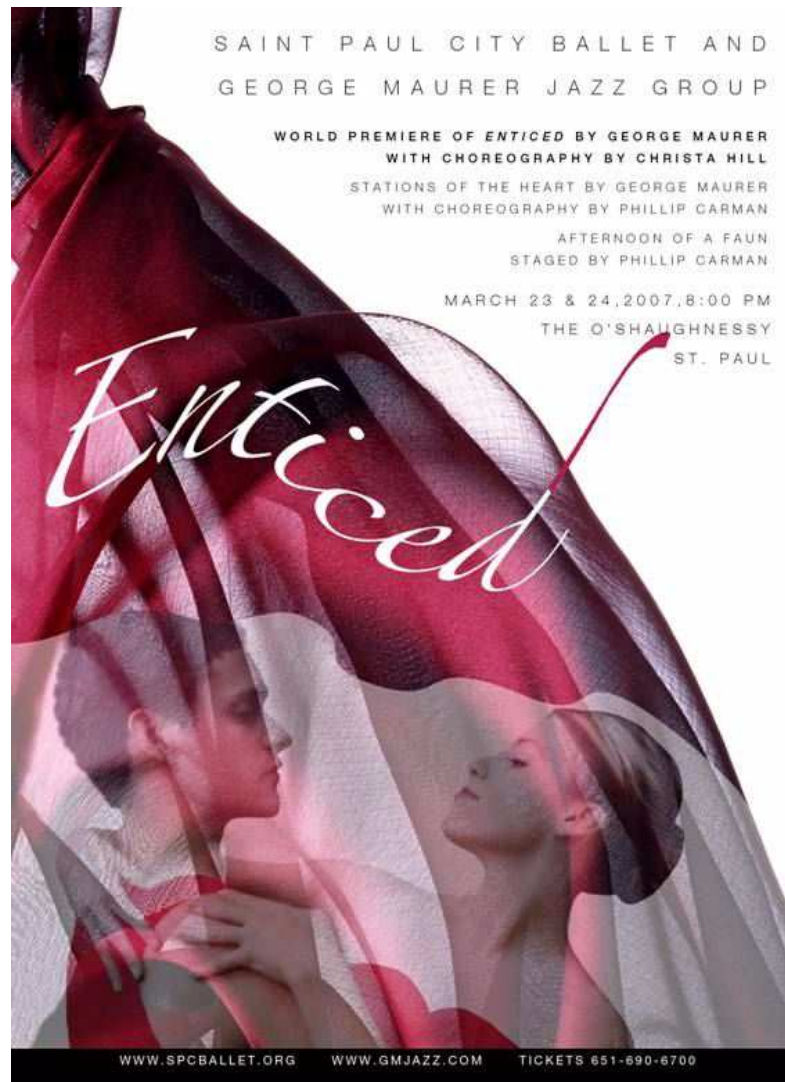
The initial performance is Friday, March 16, 8 pm at The Paramount Theatre, St. Cloud. Call 320-259-LINE for tickets (\$20, \$18, \$15). Genre-bending performances continue Friday, March 23 and Saturday, March 24, 8 pm at The O'Shaughnessy Auditorium, College of Saint Catherine, 2004 Randolph Avenue, Saint Paul, MN. Call 651-690-6700 for tickets (adults \$25, seniors \$20, students \$15).

Enticed is an original jazz orchestral composition of six movements commissioned by Saint Paul City Ballet and

created by George Maurer with choreography by Christa Hill. Viola, violin, cello, and other instruments create orchestral jazz. Led by pianist/composer George Maurer, this expanded George Maurer Group is motivated by a common love of jazz for the sake of playing jazz.

Experience *Stations of the Heart*, a new jazz song cycle based on the great American Songbook, with choreography by Phillip Carman, original music by jazz pianist/composer George Maurer, lyrics by Jim Payne performed by vocalist Carrie Mineck. Next, enjoy *Afternoon of a Faun*, a lovely, sensuous classic ballet staged by Phillip Carman after the choreography of Nijinski.

Members of The George Maurer Group have performed at Carnegie Hall, Montreaux, The Dakota, The Fitzgerald; for members of Congress and the White House; and with Bob Hope, Debbie Duncan, and many other artists. Their 1999 CD, *Jazz in Black and*



White, is a tribute to George Gershwin and Duke Ellington. Their recent CD is *On Track: Live at The Dakota*.

Enjoy pre-performance jazz by one or two members of the Dakota Combo, which is sponsored by The Dakota Foundation for Jazz Education in cooperation with MacPhail Center for Music.

The performances are underwritten by the Arts Commission of the City of St. Cloud and co-sponsored by the Saint Paul City Ballet and The O'Shaughnessy. For information, see www.spcballet.org.

Contact: Saint Paul City Ballet, Georgia Finnegan Amdahl, 651-690-1588.

Members of TCJS can receive tickets at half price.

Across America, March is Music in Our Schools Month

By Vicci Johnson, Education Chair

The National Association for Music Education (MENC) has declared, "March is Music in Our Schools Month" to advocate for public school music programs. It's timed to correspond with the Minnesota Citizens for the Arts advocacy day (March 12, 13) and the Americans for the Arts (March 8) advocacy day in Washington, D.C., and other states.

To view how Minnesota public schools will advocate for music, go to www.menc.org. And here are some of my own thoughts regarding advocacy:

My 70-year-old next-door neighbor listens to the radio shows of Jerry Swanberg, Arne Fogel and Garrison Keillor. She also listens to her favorite recordings by Count Basie, Bing Crosby, Frank Sinatra, the Beatles and Elvis. And, she still purchases season tickets to the Minnesota Orchestra. Her Minnesota public school community gave her a complete education and appreciation for diverse forms of music.

But today, how many students of hip-hop and rap hold season tickets to the Minnesota Orchestra? How many students of rap attend jazz concerts? Few young people today appreciate more than one form of music. How could we allow this to happen?

Today there are only a few urban public elementary schools offering music programs in which the curriculum reflects the basic skills necessary to become a professional musician. Moving through such a system, only a few students may find the opportunity to consider the field of music education, or at least become an arts aficionado and patron of the arts. To reverse this trend, we have March is Music in Our Schools Month. This is a great start. However, this program is just one way to advocate for returning music programs to the public schools. I believe to reverse this trend; it will take a grass-roots movement by today's adult community of musicians and music aficionados alike to stop systematic cuts to school music programs across the United States.

The three major reasons for those cuts seem to be: In part, that music is not considered a necessary core curriculum, such as is math, reading, or science, by public policymakers; in part, because of the above, music education is not being taught as an important

component in graduate courses of public administration, and in part, because of the above, fewer funds are appropriated for public schools.

Well, here are some thoughts regarding those "in-parts."

First, students performing together as early as kindergarten are trained in how to use the discipline of collaboration (win-win), good preparation for adulthood in a culturally diverse workplace.

Second, Kodaly vocal music used as a vehicle to deliver the daily curriculum of math, reading, and science has been shown to raise student grades. Music makes learning a fun community activity with few or little concerns regarding class control or discipline.

Third, if a community possesses a healthy arts economy, the community at large reflects a better quality of life. There are fewer people in poverty.

Fourth, the majority of people in a community that practices and appreciates the arts have earned degrees beyond high school.

Support for the first, third, and fourth claims can be found in Richard Florida's three books on the creative class and the local economies. Supportive evidence for the second claim, and how to use vocal music as a tool in teaching reading, math, and science, is in Dr. Elizabeth K. Berry Olson's thesis, titled *Affirming Parallel Concepts Among Reading, Mathematics, and Music Through Kodaly Music Instruction* (December 2003, University of Iowa).

And last, support of public school music programs can be found in a keynote speech by Harriet Mayor Fulbright for the Wisconsin Alliance for Arts Education, November 17, 1992, in which she spoke of evidence from Ellen Harris, a provost, from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, who wrote:

"The arts have helped prepare MIT students in business. An alumnus at a large New York accounting firm recently stated at an MIT alumni meeting that his firm interviews about 40 MIT students every year. Of the 10 they recently hired, four presented minors in the arts. This latter (arts) fact so significantly set these four candidates apart from the others in terms of creative thinking, flexibility, and presentation, that the firm is now using the arts minors as a screening criterion."

Why is Music in Our Schools Month so important to urban communities? Because after all these years of research, few public officials consider the above evidence, no matter who or what the source.

Music in Our Schools allows young students to practice creative strategies in preparation for everyday challenges in their personal as well as professional life. Music in Our Schools is vital to support the economy of the Twin Cities arts community; Music in itself, whether you are a performer or patron, is enjoyable and complementary to a quality style of living. Last, and most important, public schools were created to be the great equalizer among all classes and ethnicities of people.

To that end, if you happen to find yourself in support of public music education, please help celebrate Music in Our Schools Month by attending a concert or performance in your school district. Your support will be appreciated.

How do you perform and teach jazz improvisation?

Letter to Vicci Johnson from Mat Kramer

I think you are correct that you can't teach improv by teaching scales. Or if you do, you end up with very uninteresting output. Having said that, I do think the Blues Scale is a great way to get started. It gives someone great confidence and at least a launching point to start with. Another key is listening to a lot of different jazz — and this implies that you actually like to listen to jazz. Also, try copying (playing along with) some solos. Buy solo transcriptions and read some of them. Finally, a computer program like Band-in-a-Box or record series like Jamie Ambersol play-along will never let you get tired of comping while you try out new ideas.

- Mat

Gigs

Honeysuckle Rose Plays Fridays at the Aster Cafe

Beginning March 2, **Honeysuckle Rose** will perform Fridays from 6-9:30 p.m. at the Aster Cafe on Minneapolis' Main Street. Honeysuckle Rose plays jazz standards from the 1920s, '30s and '40s in the style of Django Reinhardt and the Quintette du Hot Club de France. Vocalist Rose Oyamot is accompanied by Dean Harrington and Dan Hansen on guitars, Holle Brian on string bass, and David Stenshoel on violin.

The Aster Cafe, 125 SE. Main St., serves soups, salads, sandwiches, desserts, beer, wine and coffee. 612-379-3138.

Christine Rosholt

Tuesday, March 6 - Dakota Jazz Club & Restaurant, 1010 Nicollet Avenue S. "My Shining Hour – A Tribute to the Music of Harold Arlen," with guest vocalist Connie Olson. If you missed the TCJS "J to Z" Series concert on Jan. 14, now is your chance to see the show!

7-11:00 p.m., \$5 cover

With Tanner Taylor- piano, Dave Karr - sax & flute, Gordy Johnson – bass, and Mac Santiago – drums.

Lee Engele

March 18 - Chautauqua Fine Arts Center, 8000 N. 75th St., Mahtomedi. Wildwood Artist Series, with Jon Schneider, Jason McLean, Nick Haas and Chris Gray. Adults \$10, Students/Seniors (62+), \$7

March 19 - 5:30 - 9:30 - Rossi's Blue Star Room, 80 S. 9th St., Minneapolis, 612-312-2880.

March 24 - 5:30 - 8:45 - Rossi's Blue Star Room.

CD Release Party: *"I Love Being Here With You"*

Saturday, March 24, 8 to 11p.m., Dakota Jazz Club & Restaurant, 1010 Nicollet Mall,
Minneapolis. 612-332-1010

Featuring: Nancy Bierma, piano; Jim Bierma, bass; Nathan Norman, drums; Aaron Keith
Stewart and Tommy Bruce, vocals