Jack Kleinsinger Presents HIGHLIGHTS IN JAZZ

in association with NYU Program Board

Thursday, May 14th

8:00 PM

DYNAMIC DUOS

Bucky Pizzarelli and Slam Stewart
Doc Cheatham and Dick Wellstood
Sheila Jordan and Harvie Swartz

at N.Y.U. Loeb Student Center

Tickets At Box Office Or Mail Order To:
Highlights In Jazz, 7 Peter Cooper Rd.,
New York, NY 10010
Make Checks Payable To Highlights In Jazz

566 LaGuardia Pl. at Washington Sq. South
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Tickets $6, Students $5
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Jordan: the thrill is here
By RICHARD M. SUDHALTER
SHEILA JORDAN and bassist Harvie Swartz went on last at a high light in Jazz duo concert at Loeb Student Center. In a way that was regretable. It meant that the audience, hot and impatient at sitting still for so much small focus, attention demanding music, began to struggle out halfway through the set.
In view of that, Sheila Jordan's performance was all the more rewarding -- untroubled, poised, controlled.
The reason can perhaps be expressed that Sheila Jordan is one of the very few real jazz singers on today's scene. That limits a category of performer -- and defines it.
Many superb singers work within a jazz context, are respected by jazz instrumentalists -- but are not of the idiom. Some be- lighted souls seem content to spin tricks and manner into a facsimile of style. Others are simply creatures of fashion. Few actually base their approach in the substance and spirit of jazz solo improvisation, with its inflec tions, tonal palette and sense of surprise and risk.
Sheila Jordan does.
Thursday evening she and bassist Swartz -- a virtuoso of uncommon sensitivity and responsiveness -- explored a handful of standards, discovering subtleties and surprises.
They made of The Thrill Is Gone a terrifying cry of inner anguish and emptiness, rivaled Hoagy Carmichael's Baltimore Oriole as a cautionary tale.
But none of that approached Lacy Afternoon, which lingers yet as an incomparably erotic experience, palpable and musk sweet.
The power of this performance overshadowed somewhat the efforts of the other two duos on the bill. Trumpeter Dick Cheatham and pianist Dick Wellstood were unfailingly elegant and vibrant. Guitarist Bucky Pizzarelli and bassist Slam Stewart entertained -- but stayed on the surface.
Dynamic Duos: An irresistible bill here, with Doc Cheatham and Dick Wellstood, Sheila Jordan and Harvie Swartz, and Bucky Pizzarelli and Slam Stewart. Mainstream con victions and instrumental savoir faire, May 14, Loeb Student Center, 566 LaGuardia Place, 598-3757. (Giddins)
to face it always a pleasure to work on your highlights, Sten
establishment in New York. Good luck. --Harvie Swartz
Duets

I, for one, am a big fan of duets. There is something about hearing two minds and instrument interact that I find most stimulating. While solo playing can become boring in the wrong hands, a duo can be as interesting a jazz group as anything. This was Jack Kleinsinger's idea for his recent 'Highlights in Jazz' offering: Doc Cheatham and Dick Wellstood, Slam Stewart and Bucky Pizzarelli, and Sheila Jordan and Harvie Swartz. Of course, at least half of each of these duets is a rhythm player, sort of cheating, but the concert worked well in its chamber setting.

Dick Wellstood could easily be called a rhythm section, his left hand laps like the waves against the shore—not overpowering, but steadily striding. I happen to be a rapt devotee of stride piano in any form (no trip to Paris is complete without a visit to hear Joe Turner on the Right Bank) and I was impressed with Wellstood's solo offering of a pair of Sidney Bechet numbers, Georgia Cabin, a slow, moody blues, and Broken Windmill. He and Doc played a handful of standards with a delicate rapport—Doc pointing his trumpet to the heavens and offering sweet, complete improvisations with his fur-lined tone. Cheatham also offered a couple of vocals in his smooth refined, confidential whisper of a singing voice (augmented by the rolling 'r') 'Don't Take Your Love From Me' and 'I Want A Little Girl.' An excellent pairing of two like-minded weather birds.

Slam and Bucky (sounds like two baseball stars) are two more peas in one musical pod. Bucky's seven-string chordal effect is a perfect foil for Slam's hum-a-long creations on the bass fiddle. They swing gracefully through a couple of standards and two of Slam's showpieces, Flat-Foot Floogie and Play, Fiddle, Play. The floy, floy still works magic.

The set ended with all four men jamming and a most pleasant combination it was.

The second half began with David Friedman, a vibes player of the Gary Burton school, playing two unscheduled duets with bassist Swartz. The music was of that floating, ethereal (sometimes boring) type that is so popular now.

Sheila Jordan, whom I've praised before, is at her best when she's singing standards and accompanied only by a bassist. She did and she was and she was exceptional. Her trumpet-like tone and intense, mesmerising way with a lyric were quite evident, especially in her unique reading of Let's Face The Music And Dance — Swartz proving unflagging and witty, tossing off bits of Flat-Foot Floogie. A typically satisfying evening of 'Highlights in Jazz.'
Jack: Thanks for the chance to Duo out here at Rock & Roll. All the best.

David

DAVID FRIEDMAN