Jack Kleinsinger presents

Highlights in JAZZ

in cooperation with NYU program board

Wednesday, March 16th, 8:00 P.M.

Heroes of Early Jazz

EUBIE BLAKE

SAM WOODING and his orchestra

featuring Rae Harrison

N.Y.U. LOEB STUDENT CENTER

Tickets: $5.00; Students: $4.00
Student Balcony: $2.50
566 LaGuardia Pl. at Wash. Sq. So.
Telephone: 598-3757
Tickets at box office or by mail order. Make checks payable to New York University
EUBIE BLAKE

BY ED WATKINS

The great Eubie Blake has just passed his 94th birthday, and there was a jazz shindig in his honor at NYU. Naturally, the Grand Young Man himself came on as the stellar attraction and hit those ivories as energetically and musically as ever. He sang along on some of those enduring Sissle and Blake tunes, interspersing them with humorous patter that brought down the sold-out house. Eubie also introduced a charming vocalist with a name as pretty as she is, Mary Louise, and the two of them were a lovely May-December duo.

What no one expected at this “Highlights in Jazz” concert, presented by Jack Keinsinger, were the surprise guests, none other than Earl "Fatha" Hines and Claude Hopkins, who keep perpetually young themselves. Each did a brilliant solo in tribute to Eubie.

The opening headliner, Sam Wooding, is no youngsters himself. He and his band spent many years playing in Europe. Now that he’s back among us, Sam led his orchestra in spirited versions of everything from an African lullaby to his own “Sam’s Dance.” It was the kind of rhythmic playing that really made you want to get up and do some dancing yourself.

On hand as Sam’s vocalist and partner was the vibrant Rae Harrison, who belted out “Summertime” with a jazz beat this song has never seen the likes of.

Who says music doesn’t keep you young? This concert definitely proved that it does. And there’s nobody younger than 94-year-old Eubie Blake. May he go on forever!

NEEDLES AND NOODLES

Some 120 examples of rare lace, from the 17th through the mid-20th centuries, go on exhibition today through Oct. 30 at the Brooklyn Museum, Eastern Parkway and Washington Avenue. The fourth-floor display is on view Wednesday and Thursday from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m., Friday and Saturday, and from noon to 5 p.m. on Sunday.

Famed for his tonal embroidery on the ivory keys, Eubie Blake heads up tonight’s “Highlights in Jazz” concert at 8 o’clock at New York University’s Loeb Student Center, 566 La Guardia Place. The pianist-composer, just turned 94 years old, will be flanked by another jazz pioneer as Sam Wooding leads his band. Tickets tonight are $2.50 to $4. For more information: 598-3757.

EARLY JAZZ

Pianist Eubie Blake will appear in NYU’s “Highlights in Jazz” on Wednesday, March 16 at the Loeb Student Center, beginning at 8 p.m. Also featured will be the Sam Wooding Orchestra featuring Rae Harrison.

Arts and Leisure Guide

Edited by ANN BARRY

Of Special Interest

Jazz Trio

Jazz buffs will be treated to three outstanding concerts this week. On Friday at 8 P.M., both Avery Fisher Hall and Carnegie Hall are making a bow to jazz, with the Preservation Hall Jazz Band at the former, and bandleader Count Basie and singer Billy Eckstine at the latter. Preservation Hall, the biggest jazz attraction in New Orleans, was founded in the early 1960’s by a group of enthusiasts who wanted to bring back the then-out-of-work musicians who had played in the old New Orleans dance halls. The group visiting New York this week will revive those days, as well as revive popular tunes from the 20’s and 30’s. The joint concert by Mr. Basie, who was discovered in Kansas City in 1935, and “Mr. B.” who started out as a trumpet player with Earl “Fatha” Hines in 1928, will be their first in New York in three years.

Eubie Blake, an early pioneer of jazz who has just reached his 94th birthday, continues to demonstrate his youthfulness at the piano keyboard. On Wednesday, at NYU’s Loeb Student Center, he will share the bill with the Sam Wooding Orchestra, whose Chocolate Kiddies Orchestra was traipsing around Europe in the 30’s with the new sound. (See Model)
Good jazzmen, like wine, get finer with age

Jack Kleinsinger is a lawyer and an assistant district attorney of the state of New York. He is also a jazz fan who organizes and presents monthly jazz concerts at New York University's Loeb Student Center in New York City.

During a trip to The Apple a few weeks ago, more on that next week, I received an invitation to attend Kleinsinger's most recent program in his "Highlights In Jazz" series titled "Heroes Of Early Jazz," featuring Eubie Blake, Sam Wooding and his orchestra.

The unique concert opened with Wooding, he'll be 82 in June, and his band playing a set of original tunes and a few standards. But Sam's ensemble, which has gone through some personnel changes recently, just did not have it together.

The second half of the program was devoted to the venerable Eubie Blake, who is 84 years old, "and proud of it," he says. I have heard this amazing pianist and composer before and I must say this performance was one of his best. He charmed the sell-out audience, many of them young people, with "You're Lucky To Me," a tune he wrote with lyricist Andy Razaf for Eubie's band in "Blackbirds Of 1928," and a couple of his rags, "Troublesome Ivories" and "Kitchen Tom." There is so much visual pleasure in Eubie's performance, as those who have seen him on television well know.

His hits "I'm Just Wild About Harry" and "If You've Never Been Vamped By A Brownskin," written with his late partner Noble Sissle for the celebrated 1921 show, "Shuffle Along," were sung by a pretty young lady -- I missed her name -- with a nice voice. Eubie got an honest standing ovation and for an encore he played "The Stars And Stripes Forever."

Claude Hopkins, another remarkable jazz artist with a lengthy career, was also on the program as a surprise guest. The 74-year-old pianist and composer, who led one of the most popular black bands of the '30s, played an enjoyable set that included his theme and best-known song "I Would Do Anything For You" and some stride tunes that sounded marvelously fresh.

Another surprise, in this memorable evening, was the appearance of Earl Hines, a great pianist in jazz history, who was on hand to pay tribute to Blake, one of his early inspirations. Hines, who is a mere 71, reminisced about the time when Eubie came through his hometown of Pittsburgh, Pa., and impressed with hearing the young Hines, said, "If I find you here when I pass through again, I'm going to wrap my cane around your head." The next time the two met, in Chicago where Hines was appearing, Eubie told him, "I don't have to wrap my cane around your head now."

According to my friend James Jordan, who is with the New York State Council on the Arts, this concert, representing more than 300 years of jazz talent, marked a departure from other "Highlights In Jazz" programs in that it was the first time Jack Kleinsinger had presented an entire evening of jazz artists performing their own compositions.

I must express my admiration for Eubie Blake, Sam Wooding, Claude Hopkins and Earl Hines who are so full of life, continuing to grow, and still very active musically. It is rather pathetic to see many people age so badly, with little to do in their golden years but watch all the unadulterated garbage on the tube or sitting in the dark looking out on the street at people going in and out of cars.
AND ALL

THAT JAZZ!

by Dick Murphy

March 16 marked the appearance of Eubie Blake at the Highlights in Jazz concert at Loeb Student Center at N.Y.U. Sharing the bill with the legendary pianist was Sam Wooding and the band with special guest artist Rae Harrison. Due to business pressures I was unable to attend but word reaches me that the show was a sell out smash. I regret missing Eubie, but had mixed emotions about doing a review; doing a critique of Eubie Blake is tantamount to doing a critique of Moses.

OUR MUSIC CRITICS GIVE US THE WORD

HIGHLIGHTS IN JAZZ

An unusual evening in celebration of the survivors from the prehistoric age between ragtime and Armstrong. Eubie Blake and Sam Wooding are the central attractions, but bandleader Claude Hopkins and trumpeter Taft Jordan will also make rare appearances. Tonight, March 16, 8 p.m., 566 LaGuardia. (Giddins)

Eisen & Lubin Auditorium
598-3757

OLDTIME Jazz great Eubie Blake will headline a concert at the NYU Loeb Student Center, near Washington Square South Wednesday night, beginning at 8.

A two-hour concert of wizards on the musical instrument known as kazoos will be held at 8 Friday evening at Alice Tully Hall. The title of the show: 'Kazoophony.'
Ragtime lives in the hands of Eubie Blake

By Jerri A. Bass

NEW YORK — Last week at the Loeb Center, an extension of New York University, Eubie Blake played to a packed house during the "Jazz Heroes Concert Series."

The audience was warmed up for Blake by the Sam Wooding Orchestra. He and his cohorts entertained with sweet sounds of the yesteryears, 1920s to 1950s. Along with these gentlemen was a singing dynamo, Ms. Rae Harrison.

She literally has to be "cooled out" after each song. Such was the passion that inflamed her as she mellowed her verses to show the audience her talents.

As the expectant ragtime crowd awaited Blake's appearance, another world-renowned pianist appeared in the person of Earl "Fatha" Hines. He-related onstage how some 50 years ago, Blake had threatened to beat him with a cane if he did not make the "Big time."

The next time Blake saw Blake, he avoided the beating because he had his own band and was making a name for himself.

An alert audience would not let Hines off the stage without doing a number. Fatha obliged by rendering a snappy scale riff of classical jazz, such as the kind that has made him an international star.

Blake, a spry figure despite his 94 years, strode from backstage and sat at the piano and began playing the different types of ragtime, that have been a century or more in existence. Blake was born Feb. 7, 1883, in Baltimore. Age makes Blake all the more attractive and it seems that music is his spiritual calling.

A biography of Blake mentions the fact that he began picking out notes and melodies on a department store organ at the age of seven. A salesman, astonished by this seven-year-old's "quick audition," sold Blake's mother a piano.

Blake titled his first musical piece "Sounds of Africa" at the age of 15. In 1948 the late President Truman, as a presidential candidate, chose a song written by the late Noble Sissle and Blake named "I'm Just Wild About Harry" as his campaign song.

... During the entire evening, the audience seemed amazed at Blake's dexterity as he ran through highlights of his greater moments. The song, included, "I'm Just Wild About Harry," "In Honeysuckle Time," "You're Lucky to Me," and "Charleston Rag."

Blake later introduced Ms. Mary Louise, an actress and recording artist. They perform together on a popular tune called "If You Have Never Been Vamped by a Brownskin, You've Never Been Vamped at All."

Blake's last number, "Stars and Stripes Forever," was a tribute to the bicentennial to which even radicals could relate.

At the end, Blake thanked the audience for a wonderful ovation, stating that the loving response from an audience is the thing that makes a performer "most happy." Blake had truly made the audience happy.

Jazznews

by Steve Lake in London

and Jeff Atterton in New York

LUBIE BLAKE, the remarkable pianist-composer who has just turned 94 years-old, headed up Jack Kleinsinger's Highlights in Jazz concert at New York University's Loeb Student Centre. Eubie shared the bill with another jazz pioneer, Sam Wooding and his orchestra. There was also a rare guest appearance by pianist Claude Hopkins.

THESE HANDS — 94-year-old composer Eubie Blake displays his famous musical hands recently following his concert at the Loeb Center, an extension of New York University.
HEROES OF EARLY JAZZ

N.Y.U. Loeb Student Center, New York
March 16, 1977

Legend is a term bandied about by jazz writers all too often but in the case of Eubie Blake and Sam Wooding - whose collective ages total in the area of 176 - no description could be more apt. Eubie, who turned 94 and is well into his second (or third?) jazzhood, is of course well-known to his increasingly large collection of fans, who flock to hear this piece of living (and very loveable) nostalgia.

But Sam Wooding? Had King Oliver suddenly materialized with a contemporary big band, the surprise to those familiar with early jazz couldn't have been greater. While Oliver was leading his Dixie Syncopators in Chicago back in 1925 (and Louis was cutting his first Hot Fives), Sam Wooding was leading one of the first black bands to tour Europe, visiting Russia, Turkey, Scandinavia, Italy, Great Britain and other far off places. His band, with Tommy Ladnier, Doc Cheatham, Albert Wynn, others, made several more European trips.

Wooding's comparative obscurity is understandable - he was on tour abroad while contemporaries like Oliver, Henderson and Louis Russell made scores of records back home to win a degree of immortality with latter-day fans. About the only notable records he made that are currently available (on Biograph) were cut with his Chocolate Dandies in 1925.

At the invitation of Jack Kleinsinger - who's always willing to take a gamble on such surprises while jazz festival nabobs bet on sure things - Wooding (who now resides in New York) organized an orchestra, made up mostly of capable young studio musicians, for a single appearance at N.Y.U.'s Loeb Student Center. Dignified and spry, Wooding announced the first number, by his old friends Spencer and Clarence Williams - Royal Garden Blues.

Surprisingly, what followed was more Basie than Bunk Johnson (as some pessimists anticipated) with the band flying into a crackling modern romp that left this old Dixieland warhorse at the stables. Subsequent numbers, mostly unfamiliar Wooding original including one subtitled Ubangi African Lullaby with overtones of Duke's The Mooche, showed that while Wooding is a legend, he is no fossil.

Vocalist Rae Harrison, a Wooding protege with whom he toured Spain, Germany (where he resided for a while), Japan etc., in the 1960s, joined the fun midway. With attractive stage presence and a style vaguely reminiscent of Nellie Lucher, she wowed them as she did in clubs in Berlin and elsewhere.

But the real showpiece of course was Eubie. While he had to fish out a promptcard from his handkerchief pocket to remind himself what to play - the tunes (ranging from Dream Rag and Lonesome Ivories to You're Lucky To Me), like Old Man River and Eubie, just kept rolling along.

An attractive singer - a "brown skin gal" named Mary Louise who was about seventy years younger than Eubie - brought new life to Eubie's old hit I'm Wild About Harry - while the audience, mostly in their twenties, went wild about Eubie.

Among the fans were Claude Hopkins, Earl Hines (whose auntie Eubie dated when Hines was a kid in Pittsburg), Muhul Richard Abrams and (in the student's balcony) Dill Jones. Hines and Hopkins, on their way to being legends themselves, were persuaded to play one number each but, humbly, neither attempted to upstage the older legends. It was their night - and one to remember.

- Al Van Starrex