Jack Kleinsinger presents

Highlights in

JAZZ

Thursday
Feb 8th
7:30PM

Clark Terry
& The Big B-A-D Band
and
Bucky Pizzarelli Trio
Tony Monte & Ron Naspo

Celebrating Highlights in Jazz’ 6th Anniversary

N.Y.U. Loeb Student Center

Tickets $5.50, Students $4.50
Student Balcony: $3.50

Make checks payable to Highlights in Jazz

566 LaGuardia Pl at Washington Square South
Telephone: 598-3757

Enclose Self-Addressed Stamped Envelope

Tickets at box office or by mail order to:
Highlights in Jazz, 7 Peter Cooper Rd.
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Coming Thursday, March 15th
BUDDY RICH and his Big Band
2 Big Concerts: 7:30 & 9:30

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Jazz Beat

LOS ANGELES—"Highlights in Jazz" begins its sixth series of concerts at NYU Feb. 8 with the Clark Terry band and the Bucky Pizzarelli Trio. Gig is at the Loeb Student Center starting at 7:30 p.m.

Cash Box/January 27, 1979

On Jazz

Jack Kleinsinger rides again! A sixth anniversary concert will be held February 8 at NYU's Loeb Student Center. Featured will be Clark Terry and his Big B-A-D Band and the Bucky Pizzarelli trio.

JANUARY 27, 1979 BILLBOARD
Clark Terry's
Big B-A-D Band
at the NYU Loeb Student Center,
February 8, 1979

The big bands, we are told, are coming back. If only it were true. Granted, on Monday evenings in New York, some clubs feature big band jazz, but these bands can only play on Monday nights when the musicians have off from their steady and better paying jobs. The Thad Jones/Mel Lewis and the Dave Matthews bands are exciting, dynamic units, yet no club in New York could survive if it had to pay their seventeen musicians a reasonable weekly salary. The few ensembles that are economically viable must travel constantly and employ generally young musicians who will sacrifice salary for the increasingly rare experience of playing in a big band. For all but a few persistent leaders, the problems of finding rehearsal space, scheduling seventeen freelance musicians for unpaid rehearsal time, and assembling a book of solid arrangements, are insurmountable. Thus, most bands have a hard time playing together; most have a hard time getting heard.

Just how great a loss this is was pointed out at the Highlights in Jazz Sixth Anniversary Concert which featured Clark Terry’s Big B-A-D Band playing before a packed hall at NYU’s Loeb Student Center. This band could be as good as any, yet it can’t get a major recording contract. The musicians play together only occasionally, picking up substitutes when someone gets a better paying job. For one glorious evening, the Big B-A-D Band did get a chance to demonstrate what they can do, and despite their lack of steady playing, they were at times overwhelmingly impressive.

For the effect to work, a big band must take you to the edge and leave you there in awe. It should stun you with the dynamism of seventeen instruments playing off each other, burning almost out of control. The sections must listen to one another and themselves; the soloists must rise above, yet listen to, the full ensemble. A band should have arrangements tailored to the strengths of its musicians, arrangements that are more than simple riffs. Then too, a big band must have a leader whose personality inspires and catalyzes the players.

The Big B-A-D Band has all these ingredients. In Clark Terry they have one of the most individual, tasteful, and talented trumpeters in jazz, a true leader. The arrangements, mostly by Ernie Wilkins or Frank Weiss, combine the swing of a Basie chart with the colors of an Ellington orchestration. The individual sections men know how and when to play and their maestro, Clark Terry, is a musician’s musician. A veteran of the Basie, Ellington, and Tonight Show bands, Terry has been revered for decades, and in this concert he reminded me just how versatile he is. He moved with ease from trumpet to flugelhorn and from ballad to hard bop. Some may play faster or higher, but no one does as many different things as well as Terry. His grace, tone, range, and fluency are pure joy.

The band opened with “Etoile” and Terry took a plunger mute to his trumpet, displaying control and great range. He pops high F’s and G’s with ease, then slides smoothly down two octaves, a Doppler effect in brass. What’s surprising about his range is his ability to color and inflect even the highest notes; he sings where others scream. On “Take the A Train,” Terry switched to flugel, riding over the band with speed and daring. He played a velvet flugelhorn ballad on “Don’t Speak Now,” displaying a full, beautiful tone that caressed the band’s background harmonies. Perhaps only Art Farmer better understands the flugelhorn, an instrument that most trumpet players play no differently than they play trumpet. Terry is also the only trumpeter to truly master circular breathing (inhaling through the nose while exhaling and playing through the lips). This impressive technique—abused by others—allows Terry to blow unbelievably long, fluid riffs, or to hold a whole tone indefinitely. In “On the Trail,” an adventurous Ernie Wilkins’ arrangement from the “Grand Canyon Suite,” Terry just about outblow the entire band. The point is, of course, that it’s easier when you don’t have to stop and take a breath.

Throughout the concert, Terry’s wild sense of humor (another in the long line of crazed trumpet players) kept the band and the audience loose and relaxed. He is a warm leader who shares his joy easily. His by now famous “Mumbles,” in which he sings/raves in a unique musical dialect, literally brought tears of laughter.

Written to showcase Terry, most of the band’s arrangements are by Ernie Wilkins, a solid tenorman in this band and a Basie veteran. His charts swing and employ some very innovative voicings: bass horn and piccolo, flutes and trombones. In “On the Trail,” Wilkins outrageously sends all three sections against each other. Terry is so impressed by this arrangement, he says so in advance: “Notice the great discipline and tight playing at the contrapuntal end of this chart.” He mockingly advises. The most powerful arrangement of the night, though, was “Shell Game” by Basie alumnus, Frank Weiss. Few arrangements have ever been as deft as this one. At its end, Terry mercifully called for an intermission.

The band played quite well throughout the evening, although they could have been tighter. Chris Woods on alto and Bill Saxton on soprano and tenor, played some inspiring solos. The rhythm section of Charles McLean, Victor Sproles, and Charlie Persip powered the band admirably.

Warren Leight
Big B-A-D Band Is G-O-O-D!

By Ed Watkins

New York's a winter festival — for jazz, that is. Foremost among the goings on was Clark Terry's Big B-A-D Band, which headlined Jack Kleinsinger's "Highlights in Jazz" concert at NYU. Early on they got off to a flying start on "Take the A Train" and you can't get any more New York than that! The 17-piece group, with Terry on trumpet and flugelhorn, projected a fine Ellington sound that never let up.

The program had a nice balance to it, for the band was preceded by the Bucky Pizzarelli Trio, with the inimitable Bucky on guitar, playing "In a Mellow Tone" and making "Honeysuckle Rose" and other tunes sound just as mellow. The trio created a warm oasis against the frigid night outside.

The metropolis was very much in evidence at the Citicorp Center's Atrium, where Ronny Whyte on piano and Jack Six on bass tossed off a superbly entertaining repertoire of songs in a "New York State of Mind." Hard to realize the enormous amount of tunes written about the Big Apple—my, my!

Over at Cami Hall on 57th Street, the Duke was elegantly present again with his two rarely played little masterpiece "Serenade to Sweden" as interpreted by Ian Finkel on xylophone, Elliot Finkel on piano. And who should be playing a bass solo but Jack Six again, plus Steve Barr on guitar and the masterful Don Reid on drums. It was a wonderfully varied program that concluded with the rarely heard Gershwin "I Got Rhythm" variations.

Yes, indeed, the city's sure got rhythm even when temperatures are way below. And if winter's here can a jazzy spring be far behind?
Clark Terry And His “Big Bad Band”

Once a month, the Loeb Student Center auditorium at New York University presents “Highlights in Jazz,” which is produced by jazz officianado, Jack Kleinsinger. In the past, jazz greats Billy Watrous, Lionel Hampton and Helen Humes have been featured.

February featured guitarist Bucky Pizzarelli and Clark Terry and his “Big Bad Band.”

Pizzarelli has played with many top musicians: He has worked as sideman and leader of groups, playing with the likes of Lionel Hampton, Buddy Rich and Zoot Sims. He is best known for his chord-comping improvisations.

Pizzarelli’s group was enjoyable. The trip had all the elements of an interesting jazz set: varied repertoire, competent musicians and most important, the trip was more than capable of swinging.

Trumpeter Clark Terry and his “big bad band” played mostly “shouter” charts, featuring many musicians in the band. Tenor saxophonist Ernie Wilkins and drummer Charlie Persip, two veterans of the jazz world, were heavily featured as soloists. Terry also gave equal time to lesser known musicians. Tenor saxophonist Billy Saxton and alto Saxophonist Charlie Williams are not names that many jazz concert-goers have heard of. Saxton and Williams are musicians to listen for in the near future.

“Randi” was a pretty tune with an interesting background. Clark Terry explained to the audience that “Randi” was written for a woman who lives abroad and has a home-away-from-home for visiting jazz musicians. Randi was in the audience and Terry introduced her to the audience. Writing a composition for a person is the nicest thank-you a musician can give.

Alto saxophonist, Charley Williams was featured on a Duke Ellington tune, “Jeep’s Blues.” Johnny Hodges played the alto solo with the Ellington band many years ago, and Williams played a beautiful tribute to Hodges by bending notes in the same way that Hodges was famous for. Of course, there was plenty of Charley Williams in the solo.

Clark Terry is affectionately nicknamed “Mumbles.” This stems from the time when he played trumpet on the Tonight show. Johnny Carson had, and still has an audience participation game in which a member of the audience can give the band the title of a song, and the band must guess the lyrics of the song. If Terry did not know the lyrics of the song, he would do a sort of scat-singing, which became known as “Mumbles.” Terry closet the set as “Mumbles” to the delight of the audience.

March’s “Highlights in Jazz” will feature Buddy Rich and his band. Tickets are reasonably priced, and Rich has one of the best “Big Bands” around today.

by Marla Kleman
Music from B-a-d to Bluegrass

Left photo: Trumpeter Clark Terry and Jack Kleinsinger at a 1976 Newport Jazz Festival Concert. Right Photo: the Country Gazette.

Tomorrow night, Highlights in Jazz celebrates its sixth anniversary with a concert featuring Clark Terry’s Big B-a-d Band and the Bucky Pizzarelli trio. Trumpeter Terry and guitarist Pizzarelli are no strangers to NYU; they both appeared at a Newport Jazz Festival Concert here in 1976. The show starts at 7:30 p.m., and tickets are $5.50 for the general public, $4.50 for students, and $3.50 in the student balcony.

Country and Western more your style? The Bluegrass Club of New York, also in its sixth year of presenting concerts, will feature Country Gazette this Saturday night at 8 p.m. Tickets are $5.50 for the general public and $4, for NYU students. Although the group has toured Europe five times, this is its first New York City appearance in three years. Both concerts will be held in Loeb’s Eisner and Lubin Auditorium.

—Mitchell Seidel