



The Swinger

Publication of Hartford Jazz Society

December 30, 1968 - No. 60

THE BENNY POWELL SEXTET, with Blues Singer Leon Thomas, will light the fuse to rocket the HJS Year 1969 soaring into orbit. Renowned for his long service in the trombone section of the Count Basie band, his stint with the Lionel Hampton aggregation, his Jazzmobile tours and his career as an actor ("A Man Called Adam"), he comes to January's HJS party fresh from a month with Ella Fitzgerald in the Royal Box of Manhattan's Hotel Americana. Leon Thomas is, of course, the powerful blues man who succeeded Joe Williams in the Basie band. The personnel of the sextet (now hear this) comprises Trumpeter Richard Williams, Reedman Harold Vick, Pianist Milton Sealey (a star of the recent Eastern Jazz Societies Conference), Bassist Eugene Wright and Drummer Omar Clay. The date is Sunday, January 5. The place is Teferes Hall, 159 Blue Hills Avenue.

COME EARLY (7:45) for a special and enjoyable feature, "Jazz in Focus," a showing of scores of photos and projected slides taken by HJS members and professional cameramen during Society meetings, concerts and the annual river cruise. Paul Schmanska and Harry Lichtenbaum are the producers.

THE STATE PRISON at Somers was the scene of a riot -- pleasurable and harmless -- December 18th when HJS provided inmates with a jazz show, one of the few live entertainments they witness in a year. The stone walls bulged when a band -- Pianist Emery Smith, Reedman Jack O'Connor, Bassist Paul Brown and Drummer Nick Valquez, with singers Connie Jackson (of the Hilton) and Harold Lewis -- gave two hours of music that moved. Accompanying the musicians into the walls were HJS members Lucy Marsters, Sammy Johnson and Joey Stevenson.

THE McCOY TYNER TRIO (McCoy with Freddy Waits and Herbie Lewis) was the attraction to the December meeting. Virtuosity is the word for the group. Energy might be applied, too. Gratitude is due Tom Klimaski of Liberty Record Distributors for his having provided door prizes in the form of Tyner's latest Blue Note album. The occasion happened to coincide with the birthday of Ex-Prexy Sammy Johnson, for whom the walls rang with "Happy birthday, Dear Sammy."

COMMERCIAL TV does little for jazz, but Educational TV in one week (Channel 24) telecast programs by the Thad Jones-Mel Lewis Band, the George Shearing Quintet and the Jacques Loissier Trio -- with no "song stylists" or prancing boy and girl dancers...Incidentally, Channel 24 on Tuesday evening will telecast an interview with

Sonny Rollins on the topic of the plight of the jazz musician in our time and in our nation. Unhappily, this is on New Year's Eve, but you might quiet the paper horns long enough to catch this show...

SPEAKING OF EDUCATIONAL TV, a show you might have missed last week was "More Than Keeping Time," an informal half-hour with the Emery Smith Trio (Smith, Bassist Paul Brown and Drummer Eddie Watkins) with George Malcolm-Smith, HJS member, as commentator.

JAZZ FROM TRINITY COLLEGE: Station WRTC-FM: Mondays -- 11 to 1:30 AM, with Dave Moss; Wednesdays - 7 to 9 PM with Jim Olivetti; Fridays -- 11 to 2 AM with Mike Edwards.

WELCOME these new members: Barbara N. Curry...Mrs. G. G. Guss... Julius O. Harrison, Jr...Diane Johnson.

JAZZ IN CONNECTICUT will be the topic of a round table discussion presented from Channel 24 ETV next week by the Connecticut Commission on the Arts. HJS will be represented by its president, Big Curtis Gamble. Others participating will be representatives of the Traditional Jazz Club of Connecticut, the Dixieland Society of Connecticut and the Greater Hartford Jazz Association. The dates: Tuesday, January 7 at 8:30 PM and Friday, January 10 at 7:30 PM. Listen.

MEMBERSHIP DUES are due. Unhappily for those who do not pay before the next meeting, they will have to be charged guest fees to attend the Benny Powell Sextet and "Jazz in Focus" program Sunday, January 5th.

THE STORY IS TOLD by Bob Harrington of "The Bristol Press" of Danny Alvin, veteran Dixieland drummer: A young trombonist who had just joined the band was complaining: "The ends won't meet on the loot we're being doled. I can't afford victuals, let alone juice." To that Danny had a solution: "Go to a second-hand store. Buy an electric flatiron -- the musician's best friend. With it you can press your tux, iron your shirt, boil your coffee, even fry your egg. Lookit the money you'll save." The trombonist took the advice, but wailed the next night on the job: "The damned egg stuck." Danny screamed: "You fool you. You didn't use the trombone oil."

"TAKE BACK your heart. I ordered Iiver." (Old Refrain)