

FROM THE CHAIR

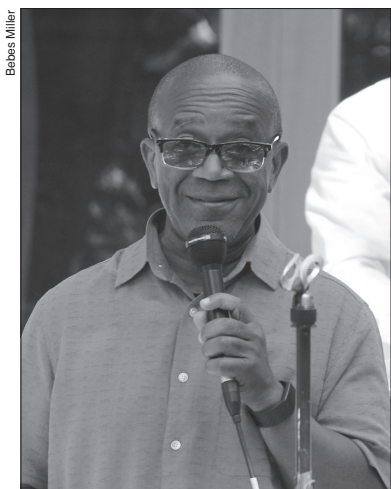
Did you join us at the First Congregational Church of Palo Alto Sunday afternoon May 29th, 2022? If you did, you were privileged to hear jazz LIVE once again, offered by drummer Akira Tana and friends: Kenny Washington, vocals; Tammy Hall, keyboard; Bob Kenmotsu, reeds; Gary Brown, bass; and Jeff Massanari, guitar.

I was there and it was just beautiful and hugely satisfying—all in keeping with the PAJA tradition of featuring Great American Songbook favorites, as well as less familiar selections that encourage listening to something different but engaging. Akira brought to our ears various fascinating pieces created by Jimmy Heath, music that stimulated his fellow musicians as well as those of us sitting in rapt attention. I had been dubious about those unfamiliar tunes, but it all blended to the benefit and enjoyment of all. There is nothing like being there as it happens.

All of this was in celebration of 30 years of other such pleasurable occasions and remembering how Herb Wong and Henry Page established PAJA as a sponsor of live jazz, and also to raise funds to support jazz education. For me, the Heath segments were an education long to be valued. AND we more than covered expenses!

Getting operational after a two-year-plus layoff

points up just how much effort is required to arrange gigs like these. Special thanks to Harvey Mittler, our event chair and producer, for his continuing efforts to find and put together attractive musical ensembles, for planning the program and dealing with the various contractual agreements and other operational matters.



Kenny Washington sparkled at our May 29th concert.

Other members of the Board and various volunteers took over certain jobs and helped the all-around effort. And the audience of about 170 serious listeners was certainly instrumental in making this live gig special. Thanks to all hands.

PAJA lost two long-time dedicated members recently. Judith Kays has left us, and we are very grateful for the significant financial gift in her honor from her family. Bruce Powell was another long-time PAJA member, and a great jazz fan. A former PAJA Board member, he produced a couple of memorable PAJA concerts about ten years ago, including the Jeff Hamilton Trio and The Hot Club of San Francisco. Bruce was also a contributor to The Jazz Buff. Bruce and Judith will be missed.

So, we are embarking on our 31st year of dedication to live jazz and education. Thanks for joining us on this journey.

In continuing appreciation of your support,

C. Stuart Brewster

Chair, Palo Alto Jazz Alliance

GREG ABATE FINDS WORK

‘[After leaving Berklee School of Music] Greg headed west with three musician friends. He worked in two Los Angeles R&B cover bands until those gigs ran out. Living in Santa Monica and looking for work in 1973, Abate spotted a musicians’ union notice for auditions for Ray Charles Enterprises. ‘I happened to be in the right place at the right time,’ he recalls. After four days of auditioning, Charles hired him to succeed Eddie “Lockjaw” Davis as the band’s lead alto player. . . ‘I was hired to play alto and flute, but I never played flute before. I had to buy a flute for the audition. I couldn’t play the freaking thing,’ he says. ‘James Clay, who was playing tenor, was always so nice to me. The piano player did the intro to “Georgia” and there were some flute things in there, but James played them for me. It was perfect, because Ray couldn’t see who was playing. Ray never commented, but he never complained.’” From “Greg Abate” by Ken Franckling in *Jazz Times*, June 2022.

TANA AND FRIENDS SPREAD THE JOY

Photos by Babes Miller and Karl Robinson

When PAJA's Board of Directors decided the time was right to resume live concerts (after a three-year pandemic-caused hiatus), Event Chair Harvey Mittler turned to Akira Tana to put together a band worthy of a special 30th Anniversary Concert. Tana, one of jazz's top tier drummers and a product of Palo Alto's Gunn High School, was the perfect choice to assemble an all-star group, and he came through with an ensemble that included the brilliant bassist Gary Brown, Bay Area keyboard stalwart Tammy Hall, veteran Jeff Massanari on guitar, and Bob Ken-motsu and his silken tenor sax. When Harvey suggested he add a vocalist, Akira went for the gold and recruited the one and only Kenny Washington, or as Akira calls him, "Special K".

And so the planets aligned for a joyous concert on May 29th at the very pleasant, shaded courtyard of the First Congregational church of Palo Alto. A packed house was treated to some tasty standards by Kenny and several beautiful instrumental numbers composed by Jimmy Heath, the tenor sax legend whom Akira has been close to for many years.



Akira Tana

Strangely, Kenny sang only one song from his recent superb "What's The Hurry" album—"Sweet Georgia Brown", but there were plenty of gems for Washington fans, including "Honeysuckle Rose," Miles's "All Blues," The Beatles' "Yesterday" and especially a killer rendition of Carole King's "You've Got a Friend." This was the third or fourth time Kenny has performed for PAJA. Tana, a long-time friend of Herb Wong's, has also appeared several times for PAJA.

All in all, a beautiful late spring Sunday afternoon, with live jazz performed by masters of the genre. PAJA's next scheduled concert is the Six Jazz Masters, led by Greg Abate, at the Community School of Music and the Arts in Mountain View in October.



Tammy Hall on keyboard



Bob Kenmotsu,
tenor sax.



Kenny Washington



Greg Abate

ABATE AND BOP

"A hard bop specialist, [Greg Abate] still loves the challenge of playing and composing in that style. 'You have a lot of choices,' Abate says. 'There are infinite possibilities with the chords going on. It never ceases to amaze me what a challenge it is. To play in that tradition, I'm doing things that are from the past. Other people don't hear it, but I love it so much. . . So many sounds are so ugly now. There are no harmonics, no chords. What do people hear these days? Why do things have to change from that good music?'"

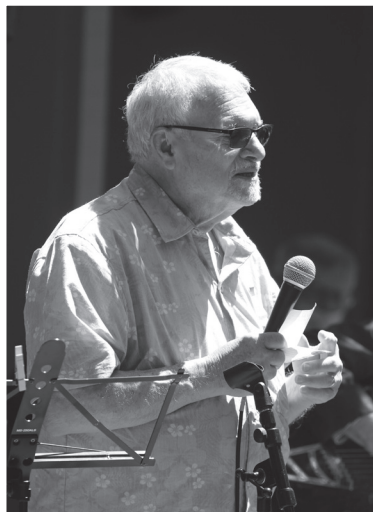
"Abate says he now thinks of the music he makes, the solos he takes as 'surgical playing. Improvising is not just playing a lot of notes. You can do that, but it's not making a story. If a surgeon operating on someone puts that knife in the wrong place, it might cause a lot of harm. If you put a note in the wrong place, you're not going to kill anybody, but it is not right. It has to be in the right place. . . I never get tired of it. It is such a great feeling to put the air in there.'"

From "Greg Abate" by Ken Franckling in *Jazz Times*, June 2022.

MORE PHOTOS FROM THE CONCERT



Photos by Bebes Miller and
Karl Robinson



Event Chair Harvey Mittler



Gary Brown



Jeff Massanari on guitar

THE JAZZ PERISCOPE *Selected gigs for July 2022*

YOSHI'S OAKLAND www.yoshi.com/oakland

7/5-7 Jose Feliciano 8pm
 7/13 Tommie Igoe Groove Conspiracy 8pm
 7/15-17 Pete Escovedo Birthday Celebration
 7/28 Larry Vuckovich All-Star Quintet 8pm

SF JAZZ CENTER www.sfjazz.org/center

7/7-10 Joey Aleander Trio
 7/10 Tammy Hall 6:30, 8pm



Tammy Hall

BACH'S DANCING & DYNAMITE SOCIETY, EL GRANADA www.bachddsoc.org

7/10 Wayne Wallace Latin Jazz Quintet 4:30pm
 7/17 Buster Williams Quartet 4:30pm
 7/24 Jenny Scheinman Quintet 4:30pm
 7/31 Azar Lawrence Experience 4:30pm
 5/29 Brubeck Brothers 4:30pm

KUUMBWA JAZZ CENTER, SANTA CRUZ www.kuumbwajazz.org

7/8 Yuko Mabucha Trio 7pm
 7/18 Joel Frahm Trio 7pm
 7/21 Yosvany Terry Quartet 7pm
 7/28 Jenny Scheinman Quartet 7pm



Yuko Mabucha

SAN JOSE JAZZ www.sanjosejazz.org

7/7 Good Time Collective at Gordon Biersch 6pm
 7/14 Tracy Cruz 6pm
 7/21 Noah & the Arkitekts 6pm

STANFORD LIVE & SF JAZZ PRESENTS www.sfjazz.org

7/9 Music of Linda Ronstadt at Frost Amphitheatre 7:30pm
 7/14 Esperanza Spalding at Frost Amphitheatre 7:30pm
 7/23 Arturo Sandoval & Eddie Palmieri at Frost 7:30pm
 7/29 SF Jazz Collective at Frost 7:30pm

STANFORD JAZZ FESTIVAL www.stanfordjazz.org

Various events during July featuring Anat Cohen, Wycliffe Gordon, Kenny Barron and many more.

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