

FROM THE CHAIR

It never rains but it pours.

Jack be nimble, Jack be quick, as you jump over the candlestick.

In December 2022, we were filled with yuletide spirit and looking forward to a more accommodating lifestyle where we could feel more comfortable about going out to public events. The risk of getting ill from Covid seemed to be on the decline. But, no, we kept hearing about surges and new variants and communities recommending masking again.

And hopes were high that rains would come and save us from the long drought.

Well, the rains did arrive on New Years Eve to the point that there was significant flooding just two blocks from my house, as it rained and rained and rained. A mixed blessing.

So, in the aftermath of atmospheric river destruction and ongoing long Covid fears came the message from Harvey Mittler, our event producer, that our long-anticipated concert featuring Tierney Sutton and Tamir Hendelman at the Guild Theatre in Menlo Park had to be canceled. A death in Tierney Sutton's family required her and her husband to fly to Europe on Sunday for the funeral.

Harvey extended our condolences to Tierney and started the process whereby all who had purchased tickets would receive a full refund from the Guild's ticket agency. To notify ticket buyers, Harvey asked KCSM to announce the cancellation, and email messages were sent to PAJA members, along with a notice on the website home page. As many steps as possible were taken to ensure no one would show up at the theater only to find that the gig was not happening.

Upon reflection, these old sayings flashed through my head, especially the one about it not raining unless it pours. But it also made me realize that improvisation is a vital ingredient to responding to the unexpected. Isn't that what make live jazz so attractive—the unexpected, the twists and turns of the music produced by voice or instrument? That singer or instrumentalist follows a plan that includes continual improvisation,

with no efforts exactly the same twice.

So it is with the challenges presented by this cancellation. After so much planning and hard work in setting up this Guild Theatre event, it was a great disappointment for all of us. Thanks to Harvey and the staff at the theater and to KCSM, we were able to deal with the situation in a prompt manner.

Please know that we are definitely not done with concerts and we are working on a revised schedule for the summer and fall to come. Stay tuned.

Thank you for your continued support,

C. Stuart Brewster
Chair, Palo Alto Jazz Alliance



Bria Skonberg was a hit on the recent Jazz Cruise.
Bassist is Nicki Parrott.

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE JAZZ CRUISE

We asked a few PAJAns who were on The Jazz Cruise last January for their comments about who impressed them most on the cruise.

HARVEY MITTLER

*Best unexpected musical treat: Drummer Lewis Nash singing and scatting brilliantly at the end of a hot number by the big band. He was surprisingly good!

*Happiest moment: Seeing **Ken Peplowski** performing so well on clarinet and tenor and displaying his raucous sense of humor. Ken insisted he was winning his battle with multiple myeloma and had lost 80 pounds!



Dee Dee Bridgewater

Dee Bridgewater. See photo—nothing more to be said.

GLENN GRIGG

*On the first full day, the **Christian Tamburr** Quartet, with ace trumpeter **Dominick Farinacci**, laid it down. Fabulous. Unfortunately, there were no more featured gigs for this group on the cruise, and they spent the rest of the week as backup for vocalist Clint Holmes.

***Kurt Elling** took possession of the house, especially with his own version of Ellington's, "I Like the Sunrise."

*The **Wynton Marsalis** septet? octet? made some big band sounds and filled the theater with joyful "ya gotta hear this" jazz.

***John Pizzarelli**—masterful, defines for us the joy of making music.

ED FOX

***Bria Skonberg** and bassist **Nicki Parrott**—the blonde bombshells— joining forces to sing a swinging Tommy Dorsey version of The Sunny Side of The Street. Pure delight.

*Sing, Sing, Sing—Nine of The Jazz Cruise's vocalists topping one another. **Niki Harris**, the last one up,

wondering how she could compete with what had gone before opted for a Julie Andrews impression—"The Hills Are Alive..." A perfect sendoff.

*How about this for a big band trumpet section? **Randy Brecker, Bijon Watson, Terell Stafford, and James Morrison?**

Samara Joy was new to me, and she is an impressive vocalist. I'm not the only one impressed—she won a Grammy in February for "best new artist"—rare for a jazz singer to earn that accolade.

MICHAEL GRIFFIN

John Pizzarelli is arguably the most popular artist on The Jazz Cruise. This is saying a lot because the boat is full of marquee musicians and their enthusiastic audiences. Pizzarelli is a guitar virtuoso with a tasteful voice. He has made a career out of jazzing up The Great American Songbook and following in the footsteps of Nat King Cole.

One of the drivers of his popularity occurs when **Ken Peplowski** joins in the fun, not only by contributing his strong clarinet but engaging in spirited repartee with Pizzarelli. The two ad lib one-liners that bring down the house. Unfortunately, Ken is showing the effects of his chemo routine, but he still tours and plays in a somewhat subdued manner. His GoFundMe site is <https://gofundme/2630ca94>.

John Pizzarelli will appear live with his wife, the vocalist Jessica Molaskey, at San Francisco's Fairmont Hotel's Venetian Room on Mother's Day, Sunday May 14. \$70 and worth it.

HEARD ON THE JAZZ CRUISE

Here are some remarks and one-liners spoken by musicians on The Jazz Cruise, which finished on January 13th. These remarks may not be word for word, but we think close enough./ Ed Fox

John Pizzarelli

I played trumpet in my high school marching band. It was St. John Bosco (New Jersey) which was a very serious Catholic institution. At half time the marching band spelled out GUILT.

Christian McBride, on the critic Stanley Crouch

One of my fans exulted to Stanley—"That Christian, he can make something out of nothing." Crouch—"Yes, and sometimes he does the opposite."

McBride was playing in a jazz club in Philly and he noticed Crouch arrive in the back of the room. After the gig was over, Crouch cornered Christian and said, "There will come a point when you'll fall in love with the music again." A hard man, Mr. Crouch.

Bria Skonberg

Since I last saw you, I've become a mother. My son is now 2 years old. People used to ask me all the time, "Bria, when are you going settle down and start a family?" Well, I can tell you, there's nothing settling about being a parent. I have to go on the road just to get some sleep.

Houston Person

If I had to sum up [bassist] Ron Carter in just one word (Person made 10 albums with Carter), it wouldn't be about the music, it would be DIGNITY.

Bill Charlap

Here's a song by Salvatore Guaragna. You know him as Harry Warren. And now you know how he could have written "That's Amore."

James Morrison, multi instrumentalist

I hated the piano. I took it up at 6. And quit by 6:30.

Morrison also told a story about the Phillip Morris Super Band. They were off on a 3-month tour to Asia and elsewhere. On the way to the airport in New York the back door of the truck carrying all the musicians bags opened and one bag fell out. It was Gary Smulyan's bag. Their first stop was Taiwan, and Gary had to buy all new clothes. When he came back to the hotel, Harry "Sweets" Edison said to him, "You had the chance to buy a whole new wardrobe and you bought all the same things."

Emmet Cohen

Some years ago I was honored to play with drummer Jimmy Cobb. I kept asking him if there were tunes he'd like to play, but he kept saying no, no, whatever you choose is fine. Finally, I asked him if there were a song he *didn't* want to play. He said, "Yes, Work Song. I played that twice a night for ten years with Nat Adderley, and I never want to hear it again."

Acknowledging Houston Person's recent 88th birthday: "That's a year for every key on the piano!"



Emmet Cohen with Harvey and Claire

THIS AND THAT

St. Cecilia is considered the patron saint of music. You'd know that if you've ever listened to Henry Purcell's "Ode on St. Cecilia's Day". Those countertenors can warble some serious jazz. Cecilia's day, by the way, is in November.

Our friend **Greg Abate** and his alto sax will be in town the first weekend in March. He's playing at Mr. Tipple's, 39 Fell St. in San Fran on March 3, and Bird & Beckett, 653 Chenery St., San Fran on March 4.

Bach Dancing & Dynamite has an amazing spring lineup with headliners like Ann Hampton Calloway, a Bruce Forman, John Clayton, Jeff Hamilton reunion, Billy Childs, Geoffrey Keezer and Etienne Charles. See the March-April gigs in the Jazz Periscope later in this issue.

Joe Alterman penned a nice tribute to the late **Ramsey Lewis** in the latest issue of *Jazz Times*. He quotes Ramsey as saying, "Music is man's contribution to nature. Like nature contributes to flowers to help the landscape, man contributes music to help our daily life." Aint it the truth. . .



Etienne Charles

THE JAZZ PERISCOPE *Selected gigs for March and April*

YOSHI'S OAKLAND *www.yoshi.com/oakland*

3/4 Veronica Swift 7:30, 9:30pm
 3/10-12 Marcus Miller
 3/23 The Cookers 8pm
 3/24 Glenn Miller Orchestra 8, 10pm

SF JAZZ CENTER *www.sfjazz.org/center*

3/9-12 Anat Cohen, with various combinations
 4/6-9 Vijay Iyer Trio
 4/20-23 Chris Potter: Generations
 4/27-30 Bill Charlap with Dee Dee Bridgewater

Ann Hampton
Callaway



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

3/5 Gillian Margot, with Geoffrey Keezer Trio 4:30pm
 3/12 John Santos Sextet, with Destani Wolf 4:30pm
 3/19 Justin Kauflin Trio 4:30pm
 3/26 Ann Hampton Callaway 4:30pm
 4/16 Bruce Forman, John Clayton, Jeff Hamiton reunion 4:30pm
 4/30 Billy Childs Quartet, with Sean Jones 4:30pm

KUUMBWA JAZZ CENTER, SANTA CRUZ *www.kuumbwajazz.org*

4/13 Aaron Goldberg, Reuben Rogers, Eric Harland 7pm
 4/17 Forman, Clayton, Hamiton reunion 7pm
 4/22 Omar Sosa & Seckou Keita 7pm
 4/24 Nellie McKay 7pm
 4/27 LeBoeuf Brothers 7pm

KEYS JAZZ BISTRO *498 Broadway, SF www.keysjazzbistro.com*

SAN JOSE JAZZ *www.sanjosejazz.org*

BING STUDIO *www.live.stanford.edu*

3/15 Samara Joy 7, 9pm



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