



LOUISVILLE **JAZZ** SOCIETY

www.louisvillejazz.org

Louisville Jazz Society

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Your membership contribution is tax-deductible. Direct membership inquiries to Bob Phelps: bob.phelps@insightbb.com or (502) 896-8452.

Direct general inquiries to Patty Bailey: pattybailey@louisvillejazz.org or (502) 741-7272.

The Louisville Jazz Society occasionally provides mailing labels (not the database) to groups or organizations that have news we believe would be of interest to our membership. We do not release phone numbers or e-mail addresses. Providing your e-mail address allows us to notify you of community Jazz events on short notice. If you do have e-mail, please consider sharing it with us.



LOUISVILLE **JAZZ** SOCIETY

NEWSLETTER

Summer, 2007

www.louisvillejazz.org

2007's Aebersold Workshop Scholarship Recipient

By Leslie Stewart

This year the Louisville Jazz Society selected violinist Sara Soltau to be the recipient of its 2007 Jamey Aebersold Summer Jazz Workshop Scholarship.

Eighteen-year-old Sara, of DuPont Manual High School and the Youth Performing Arts School, was selected from a pool of talented applicants from several states to attend one of two week-long workshops which took place July 1st through the 13th at the University of Louisville. The world-renowned workshops are attended each year by over 400 students from an average of 42 US States and 26 countries and focus on jazz improvisation and small group performance with instruction from over 70 nationally-respected performers and educators.

Soltau studied alongside at least 19 other string players registered for this year's workshops. Among her instructors were violinist Sara Caswell, an IU grad who has been the recipient of numerous prestigious DownBeat magazine awards and who currently performs with the New York Pops Orchestra and with the Caswell

Sisters. Soltau, a classically-trained violinist who has studied jazz improvisation with U of L Jazz Studies Chairman Mike Tracy, also plays in the YPAS jazz ensemble and several jazz combos, as well as with numerous orchestral and chamber ensembles.

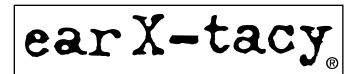
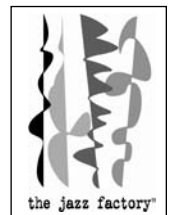
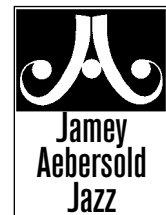
"I am so excited to have the opportunity to explore the freedom of my violin through jazz with tons of talented people and one of the greatest jazz educators of our time," said Soltau.

This is the third year the Louisville Jazz Society has presented scholarships to the Aebersold workshops. No applications were received for a separate 2-day bass/drum/guitar primer workshop.

"I can't think of a better way to begin my term as president of the LJS than with our scholarship committee's announcement," said incoming Louisville Jazz Society president Nancy Grant, who assumed the office June 1st. "Helping young musicians build their skills and enjoy jazz is such a vital part of our mission in our community."



Sara Soltau



LJS BUSINESS PARTNERS

All That's Jazz: News and Notes from the President

Nancy S. Grant



It's summertime, I've been working in my gardens, the weather's getting hotter – and so is the jazz scene here in the metro Louisville area!

As I begin my term as your new LJS president I am astounded at how many jazz events are going on around town. From the Aebersold jazz workshops and its collection of jazz greats converging downtown to the local artists with regular gigs to the Jazz Factory's varied offerings, this summer is shaping up as a spectacular bouquet of jazz. From traditional ensembles to big band to small combos and great soloists, it's all here for you to enjoy.

As a summertime kick-off the Louisville Jazz Society was once again a proud participant in the 21st annual Bellarmine Jazz Guitar Clinic in June.

Helping folks learn about jazz, whether it's improving your licks as a musician, introducing you to a new jazz style, or sharing and enlarging your enthusiasm as a listener is our top priority.

We welcome new board member Eddie Clark, trombone, who has a lot of great ideas and connections in the education world. He'll be helping us reach out to band directors and private teachers in the area to discover new ways we can encourage teenagers to explore the world of jazz. We want to make sure that the future of jazz is even more exciting.

We've taken a step in that direction already with the Aebersold scholarship awarded to 18-year-old violinist Sara Soltau. You can read more about her elsewhere in this Newsletter.

Upcoming LJS events include sponsorship of the third annual Adelante Latin Jazz Festival at the Jazz Factory in September and the Big Rock Jazz Fest featuring Roland Vazquez in October. We are delighted

to once again partner with the Highlands Douglass Neighborhood Association for this event that brings together so many jazz fans for a fun afternoon. Be sure to check out the details in this Newsletter and mark your calendar for Sunday, October 7th.

Working together to bring jazz to more people is what we do. On behalf of the entire jazz community I extend a huge "thank you" to outgoing president Patty Bailey. She's worked tirelessly to promote all things jazz here over many years and will continue on our Board of Directors as Vice President.

Through an unusual combination of retirements, changes in personal lives, and such, several long-time board members have stepped down. We bid a fond farewell to Don Swann and Bill Loeffler (thanks, guys, for selling all those t-shirts and hats!), Jim Coryell (we'll miss your keen insights), and Kathy Hopper (as secretary she dotted the i's and crossed the t's to perfection).

As we work on continuing projects and search for new ways to serve our jazz community, I encourage you to consider stepping up as a volunteer.

We're re-vamping our website, planning new fundraising activities, adding new scholarships, and exploring lots of new possibilities. You might have just the kind of expertise we're looking for (you don't have to be a musician!), so do please consider volunteering your time to help us, either as a member of a committee or as a member of our Board of Directors. You'll meet a lot of interesting people who share your love of jazz.

Check our website (www.louisvillejazz.org) often for updates, and send me an e-mail anytime at nancy@louisvillejazz.org. Together we'll figure out a way to match your special skills to the projects you could help move forward.

Enjoy this splendid summer of jazz and be sure to say "hi" when you see me at a concert or special event.

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LOUISVILLE **JAZZ** SOCIETY

Louisville Jazz Society Open Positions

Our Jazz Society is ready to increase its support of all things jazz in the Louisville Metro area, including Southern Indiana. Due to staggered terms, we have five immediate openings on our Board of Directors.

We're looking for computer-savvy individuals to volunteer for the following positions:

- Newsletter Editor
- Membership Records
- Secretary
- Webmaster
- We are also looking for a few energetic folks to help with Merchandising (selling t-shirts, etc. at jazz events).

For details about each position, please send an e-mail to nancy@louisvillejazz.org.

Mike Biggs: Who Knew?

By Jennifer Lauletta

“Herb Ellis, once said to me, ‘Learn all you can about music, then forget it and play.’ Those words stuck in my head.”

Jazz guitarist Mike Biggs is one of the best kept secrets in this area. This unassuming gentleman told me he didn’t want to look like a name dropper, but, when writing about his musical experience, there’s just no way to avoid the names.

When he was 7, Mike’s dad bought him a huge Silvertone guitar that was bigger than he was. The strings were so far from the neck he could barely make a chord, but he kept “banging” on it until his fingers bled. His parents decided it was time for formal lessons. Over the next three years, he completed the entire Mel Bay Method. Later, he would meet Mel Bay, who told him he was one of very few that had actually finished the course.

Mike listened to and tried to imitate guitarists in every genre, from Chet Atkins to Tony Mottola to Andres Segovia. “I was playing every style of music that would draw a check,” says Biggs. After playing standards for two years at the Golden Branding Iron, in Bowling Green, Kentucky, Mike met a drummer who took him to his home and played Kenny Burrell’s God Bless the Child for him. “It just blew me away,” says Mike. “And when he played Ellis in Wonderland, I was hooked.” He turned from learning Allman Brothers licks to picking up anything he could from Barney Kessel, Django Reinhardt, Joe Pass and Charlie Christian. He concentrated on constructing solos that combined his Atkins and Travis roots with his new-found love of jazz. Biggs observed, “I was a real mixed up guitar player, but it seemed to work.”

When Billy Vaughn moved from Hollywood back to his home in Kentucky, he formed a seven-piece jazz band, and Mike was asked to play with the group. Not many guitar players in the area were able to read music. The first thing Vaughn asked him was, “You do read, don’t you?” Mike’s sense of humor took over. He replied, “Well, Mr. Vaughn, do you really think that it’s that important to know the title of the song?” They were fast friends from that point on. “He taught me so much about playing swing guitar,” says Biggs. “He introduced me to the music of Count Basie and told me to listen to his rhythm guitar player, Freddie Green.”

Mike had been working with Vaughn for some time, when he received and accepted an offer from Aria Pro II, a company that built and imported guitars from Japan, as an artist/clinician, traveling the country playing shows and demonstrating the company’s new high-end line of guitars. While representing Aria Pro II at the 1980 NAMM trade show, the company paired him with Herb Ellis, who was there to play his new prototype guitar. Ellis asked, “Who’s this kid?” He insisted that Mike was too young to play the kind of jazz he played, but gave in. When the first tune ended, Ellis said, “Man, you and I need to go on the road” -- which is exactly what they did.

Ellis and Biggs were teaching at a clinic in Charleston, N.C. at the same time the Spoleto Jazz Festival was taking place there. When the festival people discovered Ellis was in town, they asked him to make a surprise appearance. He agreed, and he and Mike played two tunes.

Mike expected to do more. The people were asking for it, but Ellis thanked the audience and walked away, telling Mike, “If we leave now, they’ll pay us big to come back next year.” He was right. That’s how Mike learned there was more to the business than just playing.

Through his close connection with Ellis and Aria Pro II, Mike met and learned from Joe Pass, George Van Eps, Mel Bay, George Benson, Jerry Reed, Charlie Byrd and many others. He still uses a strap that Benson gave him, “hoping that some of his ability will rub off.” Mike also worked with Ray Brown, Jimmy Smith, Sarah Vaughan and Bob Hope (Bob Hope?).

But his fondest memory is of the few shows he did with Ella Fitzgerald. He was very nervous because one segment of the show was voice and guitar only. She recognized his uneasiness. After rehearsal, seeing him still sitting alone on the stage, Fitzgerald sat next to him. He told her he knew the guitar players she had had in the past. “I can assure you, I’m nowhere near a Herb Ellis or Joe Pass,” he said.

Ella said he was doing fine and told him to pick two songs he felt most comfortable with, and the third one would be 12-bar blues. Then she said, “Mike, I’ve been singing for over 50 years, and I know the words to every song there is. And, if I don’t know the words, why do you think I go, be-de-ba dat ba-da-ba-do?” Her kindness and reassurance has stayed with him through the years.

In 1983, Mike finished a gig in New York and said, “That’s it.” He and his wife, along with their two children, moved back to his wife’s home town of Leitchfield, Kentucky, where he opened a music store in 1984. Except for a couple of NAMM shows and a few jazz concerts for WKU in Bowling Green, he gave up professional playing.

Two years ago, he decided he’d like to find “a little sit-down gig” where he could play the music he loved. According to Mike, when he started working on his chops, he realized that arthritis was going to stand in the way of his ever playing as he had in his youth. But the desire was back, and he began digging out old charts. He found inspiration in the work of local guitarists Greg Walker, Craig Wagner and Scott Henderson.

One Sunday afternoon, Mike happened on an old friend, Don Picozzi, who plays jazz accordion. The two began booking jobs together. They work steadily now at The Gondolier Restaurant in Elizabethtown, Kentucky. But Mike found exactly what he wanted – a little sit-down gig where he plays the music he loves. You can find him every first Friday of the month at Saffron’s Restaurant. Mike tells me he will continue to play until he just can’t do it anymore. “Then I’ll hang up my picks and watch the young guys do it.”



MIKE BIGGS

Aebersold Jazz Recruits

By Mike Tracy

When one hears the word “recruiting,” images of seven-foot basketball centers or point guards arise, as do stories of fleet-footed quarterbacks or that monster lineman. And while it may sound odd, there is recruiting going on in the music world, too. One would be surprised at the amount of energy and effort that goes into establishing a quality music program, not to even mention scholarship funding.

Well, I can safely say that the Jamey Aebersold Jazz Studies Program has just completed our most successful and diverse recruiting effort ever; truly a top-ten recruiting class of jazz students. The faculty is excited about these excellent students joining our program, some for two years and many for four to five. While a listing of names is not exactly creative, I feel confident that you will hear a great deal from these outstanding young musicians. Hopefully, you will soon recognize both their names and musical abilities and help us welcome them into our community.

Graduate students:

Saxophonists Anderson Pessoa (Brasilia, Brazil) and Joe Auger (Cincinnati, OH)
Trumpeters Jonas Butler (Bowling Green, KY) and Craig Tweddell (Louisville)
Trombonist Bryan Nalls (Birmingham, AL)
Bassist Matt Human (Cold Springs, KY)

Undergraduates:

Saxophonists Ryan Sanders (St. Charles, IL), Graeme Gardiner (Lexington) and Jonathan Hogan (Cincinnati, OH)
Trumpeter Alex Moore (St. Louis, MO)
Pianists Noah Barker (Jeffersonville, NY) and Jonathan Ellis (Louisville)
Percussionists Aaron Latos (Linn, WV), Austin Skarshaug (Ames, IA) and Matt Underwood (Shepherdsville, KY)
Bassist Amy Hutts (Terre Haute, IN)
Guitarist Michael Vettraino (Lexington)

Library Offers CDs-to-Go

By Tabitha B. Hodges

The Louisville Free Public Library has always been the place to go to find ways to occupy your time, but never more so than during the summertime. There you can check out books for the beach, videos for kids who are home for summer vacation and books on tape for the family road trip. Now the library is busily adding CDs to its growing assortment of media. This CD music collection is for library patrons of all musical tastes to take home and experience.

The library’s Robert Wardell had the job of deciding which CDs would be added to the compilation. “We used many music guides,” said Wardell, relating how he went about choosing the start of each genre’s collection. He specifically mentioned the website www.allmusicguide.com, for most of his inspiration in determining which artists and albums are the most popular and traditional. This basic, classic collection will expand with time. “We have some newer stuff, but also the classics,” Wardell went on to say.

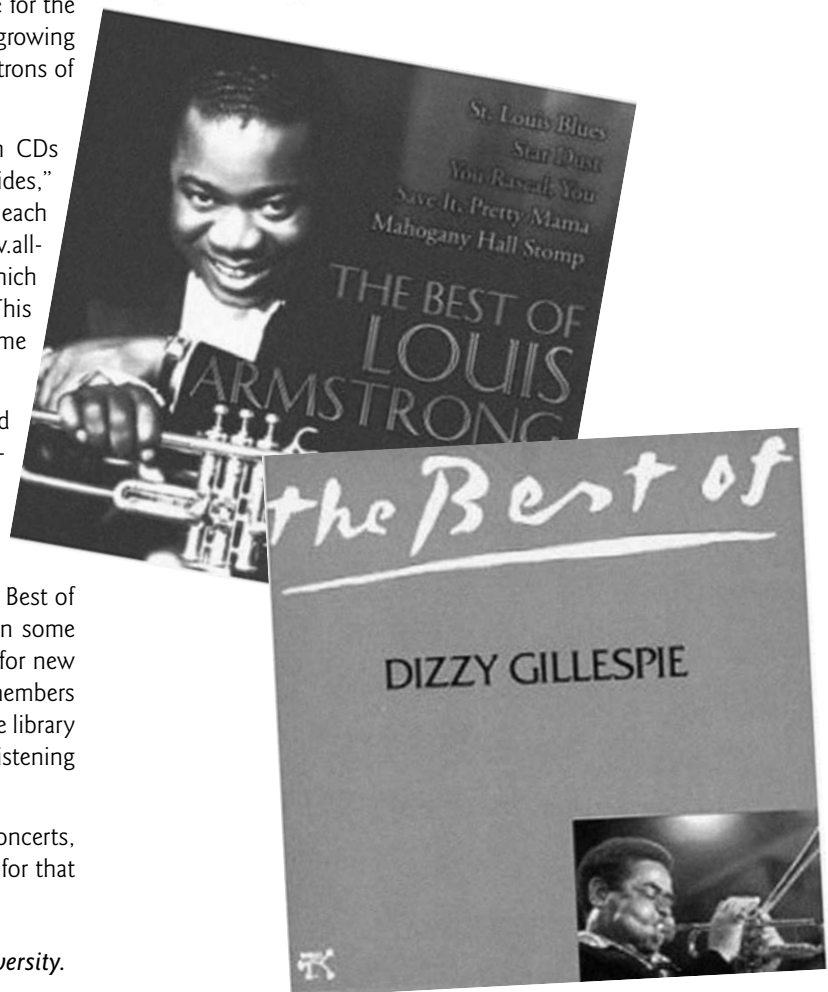
With thousands of CDs to choose from, over 800 are dedicated to jazz. While all the Louisville library branches will have a portion of the CDs, the largest offerings will be at the Main Branch at 301 York Street, as well as at Bon Air and the Southwest branches.

The Main Branch has many classics and old standards like *The Best of Louis Armstrong* and *The Best of Dizzy Gillespie*, but, to fill in some of the empty space on the racks, Wardell will accept requests for new CD purchases. To suggest a new favorite jazz artist, library members can go to the Patron Request page on www.lfpl.org. Even as the library continues to acquire more music, it does not presently have listening stations inside its locations.

With the advent of summer, jazz will be heard in outdoor concerts, while having dinner with friends, or just as background music for that new thriller we all intend to read.

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Tabitha B. Hodges is a journalism student at Bellarmine University.



JOHN COLTRANE AND MILES DAVIS - NEW LIVE RECORDINGS

By Martin Z. Kasdan Jr.
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It is simply impossible to discuss jazz over the past sixty years without dealing with the influence of John Coltrane and Miles Davis. Born in 1926, their paths would cross when Coltrane joined Davis' "First Great Quintet" and, after cleaning up from drug usage, rejoined it before Coltrane left to form his classic quartet. Each musician was uncompromising in the pursuit of his respective musical vision, often leaving contemporary critics and fans to wonder what happened to the "old" Coltrane or Davis. Miles Davis was a pathfinder, forging styles ranging from "cool" to modal to electric (fusion) jazz. John Coltrane, after overcoming personal demons, turned toward a more spiritual view of music, incorporating African polyrhythms and Indian influences. Thus, the release of previously unavailable concert recordings by these two giants is cause for rejoicing and for serious attention. In the case of both **John Coltrane: One Down, One Up: Live at the Half Note** (Impulse/Verve B0002380-02) and **Miles Davis: The Cellar Door Sessions** (Sony/Columbia K93614-S1), these releases will replace long circulating bootleg, gray market and trader versions with improved sound quality, extensive notes, and the ability of fans throughout the world to support the estates of these artists. Both present incredibly intense performances.

Coltrane's **One Down, One Up** is taken from two 1965 radio broadcasts, on March 26 and May 7. These concerts represent a transitional time for Coltrane with his classic quartet of pianist McCoy Tyner, drummer Elvin Jones and bassist Jimmy Garrison. These discs document longer-form improvisations on themes both familiar (Mongo Santamaria's "Afro Blue" and Rodgers and Hammerstein's "My Favorite Things") and new (Coltrane's own "One Down One Up" and "Song of Praise"). Interestingly, the source material seems to be recordings from the broadcasts themselves, as opposed to recordings made on-site. Thus, the first disc begins with a bass solo, already in progress, with announcer Alan Grant welcoming the broadcast audience to the performance. The ensemble then erupts into 27-and-a-half minutes of further improvising on the title piece of this release, the seldom-heard "One Down, One Up." Following another announcement by Grant, Coltrane begins the popular Mongo Santamaria composition, "Afro Blue," which regrettably fades out after less than 13 minutes. These are trifling matters, however, as the performances are absolutely stunning, notwithstanding the fade-ins and outs.

The second concert begins with "Song of Praise." As suggested by its title, there is an invocational flavor to this piece, which explodes into an almost 20-minute workout stoked by the high energy of Jones' drumming. "My Favorite Things" soars for almost 23 minutes before the radio broadcast captured here comes to an end. Liner notes by author Ashley Kahn and Coltrane's son Ravi Coltrane document both the metamorphosis of the band in its final period, and how tapes of these broadcasts circulated among and inspired musicians such as



John Coltrane



Miles Davis

Dave Liebman and Pat LaBarbera. Hear for yourself why these recordings became the stuff of legend over the forty years since the original broadcasts.

Miles Davis: The Cellar Door Sessions consists of six CDs, each documenting a single set taken from a four-night stand at the Washington DC nightclub, the Cellar Door, December 16-19, 1970. Small portions were previously officially released on **Live-Evil**, but when these segments are heard in the context of their original performance sequences, they take on new dimension. This documents Davis' fierce and unrelenting excursions into the rhythms of funk and rock, with an intensity that can sometimes be frightening. Taken as a whole, these sets describe a trajectory. The first two sets feature the core band of Keith Jarrett (uncharacteristically playing electric piano), Gary Bartz (soprano saxophone), Jack DeJohnette (drums), and Michael Henderson (electric bass). Beginning with a characteristic set opener for this period, Joe Zawinul's "Directions," Davis prods his band into segues which link the songs into a set-long medley. Davis, who had been known for much of his career as a balladeer par excellence, had essentially eschewed balladry during this period. The slow "Yesternow," from **Jack Johnson**, comes as close to a ballad as anything on this collection. Interestingly, despite the fact that many of the compositions are repeated from set to set, such as Davis' fast, funky "What I Say," "Yesternow" is only represented by this one take.

The heat rises when Airto Moreira joins the band on Brazilian percussion for the third through the sixth CDs. What many now refer to as "world music" was introduced to many rock and jazz fans through Moreira's pioneering work with this ensemble. He adds not only rhythmic accents, but exotic colors

and accents to the steamrolling Miles Davis Band. The piece de resistance, however, is the addition of guitarist John McLaughlin, for the final two CDs. The energy level, already high, goes through the roof. Although McLaughlin had recorded with Davis on such brilliant albums as **In a Silent Way** and **Bitches Brew**, he was not part of the band and was sitting in at the leader's request. Bartz's sax and McLaughlin's electric guitar scream, cry, and push the ensemble higher and higher.

This set is not for the faint-of-heart. Essentially, the classic jazz rhythmic elements of swing have been replaced by those of funk and rock, and the band pushes hard against the preconceptions of what a "jazz" performance should be. Now, however, almost forty years later, this music can be appreciated as a boundary-stretching exercise incorporating jazz improvisation over simpler basslines. This set is a welcome addition to the collections of those who have waited since the 1971 release of **Live-Evil** for the complete sessions from the Cellar Door. In addition to the music, this handsome box also contains almost 100 pages of photographs, essays by all the surviving band members, as well as additional notes by Bob Belden and latter-day Davis keyboard player Adam Holzman.



The Louisville Federation of Musicians

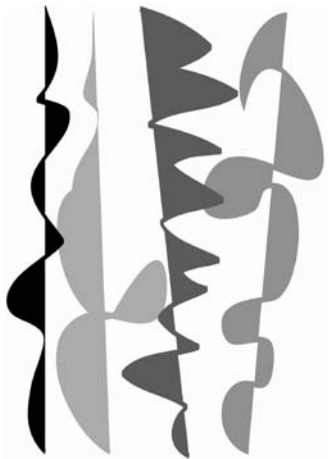
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NEWSLETTER

The **Louisville Jazz Society Newsletter** is produced quarterly by the Newsletter Committee:

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Associate Editor Patty Bailey

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Production Alfred Moreschi

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www.louisvillejazz.org

The 8th Annual Big Rock Jazz Fest

The LJS is once again a proud sponsor of the Highlands-Douglass Big Rock Jazz Fest, which is part of the Week in the Highlands. In its 8th year and going stronger than ever, this year's feature act will be the Roland Vazquez Quintet, led by a multi-talented drummer/musician/composer/arranger/lecturer....you get the picture. The music is free, as always, so please plan to come out to beautiful Cherokee Park on Sunday, October 7, 2007. He is bringing an all-star ensemble with him (read below) as evidenced by an excerpt from the Kingston (NY) Jazz Festival website.



Roland Vazquez

Further information about the Big Rock Jazz Fest can be found on the LJS website, www.louisvillejazz.org.

The Roland Vazquez Quintet plays contemporary "Latin rhythmic chamber jazz" (JazzTimes), and features some of the hottest virtuoso players on the scene today: Joel Frahm (saxes), Manuel Valera (piano), Anthony Jackson (contrabass guitar), Mike Lipsey (vibes/percussion), and Roland Vazquez (composer/drums). Vazquez's all-star bands & recordings have been on the cutting edge of the form since the late 70s. "One of the premier drummer/composers of our time; interested in the intersection of jazz and Latin music, and in composition as well as improvisation." (P. Michalowski)

"The Quintet, with its uncommonly strong crew of improvisers, is more compact yet equally explosive in its versions of Vazquez's music, which is Latin jazz with a heavy emphasis on composition. Vazquez has the ideal players for interpreting his lean, haunting, and unpredictable lines..." (Bob Blumenthal/Boston Globe)

Photos from last year's Big Rock Jazz Fest



FUTURE LJS HAPPENINGS

Sunday, October 7 ~ 1 to 5 PM

2007 Big Rock Jazz Fest

The Big Rock area of Cherokee Park



Saturday, November 10 – 8 PM

The Dave Brubeck Quartet

Memorial Auditorium

Info: www.jazz.louisville.edu or
(502) 852-6907

LOUISVILLE **JAZZ** SOCIETY

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www.wmot.org

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www.jazz.fm

www.kplu.org

www.570klac.com/music.html

www.tropicanafm.com

www.media.islagrande.com/radio/radio.html

www.windowsmedia.com

www.launch.yahoo.com

www.accuradio.com/jazz/default.htm

www.moontaxi.com/portal/radio.aspx

www.cod.edu/wdcb/wdcb_online.htm

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■ **Volare Ristorante**

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As always, we suggest that you call the venues to confirm appearances.