

# JVC Jazz Festival, With the Old and the New

By PETER WATROUS

The JVC Jazz Festival, which opens tonight, is a behemoth, but a slimmed-down behemoth, one suffering from jazz's lack of big concert draws. Like last year's festival, also a bit skinny, it is divided into two parts. The first uses the word "jazz" to represent all sorts of big-time entertainment — ethnic music, gospel, blues — as long as it can fill Carnegie Hall or Avery Fisher Hall. The second reflects the state of jazz as club-goers understand it: mainstream jazz, often played by younger musicians, a good portion of it underwritten by major jazz labels. It is all a party, and with most of the music being performed free in the great outdoors of Bryant Park, it's a particularly democratic party.

For Michelle Taylor, a senior director of jazz at Atlantic Records, "the festival and its outdoor concerts are invaluable in exposing the company's roster of young artists to a larger audience and to cash in on some of the festival's prestige. Atlantic Records has underwritten one day at Bryant Park for an exceptional lineup, including the saxophonists Wessell Anderson, James Carter and Gary Bartz, the pianist Cyrus Chestnut and the drummer Carl Allen's group.

"We have a lot of wonderful musicians who tour a bit in Europe or Japan, but because they're young don't get much festival exposure in the United States," Ms. Taylor said. "So a show like this is good for putting young artists in front of a big audience. I just pray it doesn't rain."

For the older artists, the festival is still a way to attract the attention they might not gain by performing alone during the year.

"I'll be doing my 19th consecutive show at Carnegie Hall," said Mel Tormé. "Jazz has so few places to display its wares, and a place like Carnegie Hall, which has featured everyone from Duke Ellington to Jascha Heifetz, is an important place for me."

Mr. Tormé is among the last of a generation of jazz and jazz-related musicians who can fill halls. Oscar Peterson, who rarely performs at the festival, is to be here on Tuesday night, as are Ray Charles, Illinois Jacquet and Flip Phillips. But the pickings are slim.

"This is a very difficult time in jazz," said George Wein, the festival's impresario. "There aren't many jazz headliners, and the cross-over artists aren't so hot, so it's a



Jack Vartoogian

A meeting of the generations: Joe Henderson, left, and Joshua Redman, who are to share the JVC festival stage tonight at Carnegie Hall.

real dilemma. When the festival first moved from Newport to New York in 1972, I put together Max Roach, Charles Mingus and Thelonious Monk and sold out the show. Where do you go from there?"

Mr. Wein is relying on a series of outdoor shows to cultivate some excitement. JVC Records is to be showing off Arturo Sandoval, its Cuban trumpeter, and a young, not quite fully formed tenor saxophonist, Teodoros Aveyry. The Blue Note Records deal is among the strongest of the festival, with a lineup including the exceptional Marcus Printup on trumpet, Javon Jackson's quintet, the jazz-funk guitarist Charlie Hunter and the Sonny Fortune group. Columbia Records is featuring the pianist Marcus Roberts with his trio and the Orchestra of St. Luke's, along with the New Orleans trumpeter Leroy Jones.

"The record companies all wanted to get involved," Mr. Wein said. "They're helping pay for the outdoor part. If I had to pay all the artists on the bills, I'd have to pay over

\$100,000, which I don't think I could afford. This is the first I can remember that the record companies are making a real contribution to their artists like this. But it makes sense because if the weather's nice, we'll have 12,000 people out there."

For musicians, especially younger ones, the festival has become an important way to show what they can do and to hear their peers.

"The exposure has its advantages," said James Carter, the saxophonist. "You're playing for an institution. And it's like a commune, with so many musicians getting together under one roof."

Performing in a concert setting is important for the few young musicians to make it to that level. Joshua Redman, the saxophonist, who is performing with the saxophonist Joe Henderson, says he finds that concert audiences are more respectful; they come to listen.

"For a long time I was of the opinion there was nothing better than playing in a club, but I've changed my mind," Mr. Redman said. "Con-

certs are a great way of reaching people, and it's a pleasure playing for a large audience. And it's always a great honor to share the stage with Joe Henderson, which isn't something that happens in a club."

As usual, the festival will feature a few world-music events. Celia Cruz, one of the greatest singers alive, is to be performing with the powerhouse young singer La India and the Venezuelan bassist and band leader Oscar De Leon, in an evening teeming with virtuosity, showmanship and competition. Zap Mama, an entertaining Afro-European group, is to perform with Al Jarreau, and two of Brazil's most famous singers, Gal Costa and João Bosco, are to perform.

Mr. Wein plans to carry over one of the more exciting events in the festival's recent history, a battle of the bands, featuring the Carnegie Hall Jazz Band playing against the Lincoln Center Jazz Orchestra. It's a rare chance to hear two big-bands on one stage, and also a chance to hear two of the best big bands working, bands with entirely different sensibilities.

The Carnegie Hall band draws from the sound of the Count Basie Orchestra and the Thad Jones and Mel Lewis band, while Lincoln Center's orchestra draws from Duke Ellington's orchestra of the 1950's and

1960's. The leaders, Wynton Marsalis of Lincoln Center and Jon Faddis of Carnegie Hall, are extremely competitive and funny, and last year's concert offered some inspired playing.

"The way those guys are talking, they're really into it," Mr. Wein said. "Wynton's talking about it all the time, and Faddis is working up some stuff that I can't talk about. It'll be a surprise."

For those who find the JVC Jazz Festival predictable, there's always the What Is Jazz Festival at the Knitting Factory. Michael Dorf, the club's owner, has put together a festival that includes everything Mr. Wein leaves out. He has the mainstream musicians not supported by major labels, avant-gardists who may or may not be jazz musicians at all, rockish players and those ecclectics who combine all the styles in their record collections.

"I'm trying to give people who are rarely heard in institutional settings their chance," Mr. Dorf said. "This music is broad, with all sort of nooks and crannies, and I'm digging in them to find out what people are doing. Then I'm putting it onstage. I pray there's an audience."

## Who's Playing and When

The JVC Jazz Festival begins today and runs through July 2. Tickets are available through Ticketmaster, (212) 307-7171, and at the box offices (Carnegie Hall, (212) 903-9630; Avery Fisher Hall, (212) 875-5030). Information: (212) 787-2020. Here is the schedule.

### Today

**JOE HENDERSON QUINTET AND JOSHUA REDMAN QUARTET**, with Dee Dee Bridgewater. Carnegie Hall, 8 P.M. Tickets: \$15 to \$40.  
**RAY CHARLES AND MACEO PARKER**, with the Raellettes and the Ray Charles Orchestra. Avery Fisher Hall, 8 P.M. Tickets: \$15 to \$30.

### Tomorrow

**JAZZ AT BRYANT PARK**, with Arturo Sandoval, Nelson Rangel, Teodoros Aveyry and others. Bryant Park, Avenue of the Americas at 40th Street, 3 to 8 P.M. Free.  
**MEL TORMÉ AND PEGGY LEE**, with Donny Osborne, John Litham, Ken Peplowski, Chuckritz and the Mike Renzi Quartet. Carnegie Hall, 8 P.M. Tickets: \$15 to \$55.  
**RAY CHARLES AND MACEO PARKER**, with the Raellettes and the Ray Charles Orchestra. Avery Fisher Hall, 8 P.M. Tickets: \$15 to \$50.

### Sunday

**JAZZ AT BRYANT PARK**, with the Ohio Players, Grove Collective, Repercussions, Dana Bryant, Pacho and the Latin Soul Brothers, Urban Tru, DJ's Smash, Jazzy Nice and Chill Freeze. Bryant Park, 3 to 8 P.M. Free.  
"MIDNIGHT IN THE GARDEN OF GOOD AND EVIL," with Emma Kelly, Margaret Whiting, Bobby Short and others. Avery Fisher Hall, 8 P.M. Tickets: \$15 to \$50.

### Tuesday

**AN EVENING WITH OSCAR PETERSON**, with Niels-Henning Orsted Pedersen, Martin Drew and Lorne Lopsky. Carnegie Hall, 8 P.M. Tickets: \$15 to \$60.

### Wednesday

**JAZZ AT BRYANT PARK**, with Roy Ayers, Steve Coleman with Five Elements, Danilo Perez, Antonio Hart and Vanessa Rubin. Bryant Park, 5 to 10 P.M. Free.  
"MINA D'AGUA DO MEU CANTO: A BRAZILIAN FESTIVAL," with Gal Costa. Carnegie Hall, 8 P.M. Tickets: \$15 to \$50.

### Thursday

**JAZZ AT BRYANT PARK**, with the Mar-

cus Roberts Trio, St. Luke's Orchestra and Leroy Jones; Robert Sadin, conductor. Bryant Park, 5 to 10 P.M. Free.

**AL JARREAU AND ZAP MAMA**. Carnegie Hall, 8 P.M. Tickets: \$15 to \$50.

### June 30

**JAZZ AT BRYANT PARK**, with the Wessell Anderson Quartet, Carl Allen Quintet, Gary Bartz Quintet, Cyrus Chestnut Trio and James Carter Quintet. Bryant Park, 5 to 10 P.M. Free.

**AL JARREAU AND ZAP MAMA**. Carnegie Hall, 8 P.M. Tickets: \$15 to \$50.

"BATTLE OF THE BANDS," with the Carnegie Hall Jazz Band directed by Jon Faddis and the Lincoln Center Jazz Orchestra directed by Wynton Marsalis. Avery Fisher Hall, 8 P.M. Tickets: \$15 to \$45.

### July 1

**JAZZ AT BRYANT PARK**, with the Marcus Printup Quintet, Javon Jackson Quintet, Charlie Hunter Trio and the Sonny Fortune Group. Bryant Park, 3 to 8 P.M. Free.

"TWO DIVAS AND A LION — CELIA, INDIA AND OSCAR — A LATIN JAZZ SPECTACULAR," featuring Celia Cruz, La India, Oscar De Leon and his band, and Arturo Sandoval. Carnegie Hall, 8 P.M. Tickets: \$15 to \$55.

"RUSSIA ON THE HUDSON," with Mashina Vremeni, Irina Otteva, Igor Buttman and his band, and the Allegro Jazz Ensemble. Avery Fisher Hall, 8 P.M. Tickets: \$15 to \$60.

**NEWPORT JAZZ FESTIVAL AT SARATOGA**, on the Main Stage: Al Jarreau, Little Richard, Buddy Guy, Brecker Brothers, Terence Blanchard, Thelonious Monk Jr., Carol Sloane, Tania Maria and the Newport Jazz Festival's 40th Anniversary Band; in the Gazebo: Heavy Metal Horns, the Eric Reed Trio, the Peter Dinklage Quartet, James Carter and Five Guys; Play Mingus. Saratoga Performing Arts Center, Saratoga Springs, N.Y. Noon to 6:15 midnight. Tickets: \$40 for reserved seats; \$30 for those 12 and younger; \$25 for lawn tickets in advance; \$29 for lawn tickets at the gate; \$13 for lawn tickets for those 12 and younger; free admission for those under 2. Box office: (518) 587-3330.

### July 2

"HELEN SCHNEIDER SINGS AND THE COUNT BASIE ORCHESTRA SWINGS," with Ms. Schneider and the Count Basie III Orchestra, directed by Frank Foster. The Signet Club, 240 West 47th Street, 7 and 9 P.M. Tickets: \$35. Buy tickets through Ticketmaster. Ticket holders are advised to make reservations for seating: (212) 921-1940.

**NEWPORT JAZZ FESTIVAL AT SARATOGA**, Main Stage: B. B. King, Grover Washington Jr., Herbie Hancock Trio, Herbie Mann and Les McCann, Joshua Redman, Roy Hargrove, Dorothy Donegan, Dirty Dozen Brass Band and Dee Dee Bridgewater; Gazebo: Dimitri Shapko Band, Mario Grigoriu, Clay Osborne, Jed Cohn and Carmen Leggio and the Flying Neutrinos, noon to midnight. Tickets: \$13 to \$40. Box office: (518) 587-3330.