

music matters

concert to support education program

by roger atkinson

Greg Richter has lived a rich musical life, a highlight being the years spent with great Duke Ellington reed player Jimmy Hamilton when they were both part of the St. Croix community. Working over an extended period with a master like that is a growing experience that is near impossible to duplicate.

Greg is one of many local musicians who juggle their performance schedule with education. Greg is on the faculty of Kansas City Youth Jazz and supervises The Swope Corridor Renaissance/Upper Room's Eddie Baker School of Music.

The Swope Corridor Renaissance/Upper Room Inc is a not-for-profit organization that provides high-quality education programs to low-income families in the urban areas of Kansas City, Missouri and Kansas City, Kansas.

Baker had a tremendous legacy in Kansas City, having founded The Charlie Parker Foundation. When the Upper Room started its music education program in 2005, they named the school The Eddie Baker School of Music in his honor.

The school is a grant and donation funded program that works as an adjunct to summer academic camps. The program offers free one-on-one music lessons and loaner instruments so the students can practice at home for the summer. In the beginning, Greg was the sole provider

of lessons and organized their recitals; at that time they taught 40 students a week. They have added 10 staff members since. At the end of the summer, they select as many talented students as possible and offer lessons during the school year. The program has grown to 300 students in the summer and has over 200 this fall.

Other musicians on the schools staff include Sam Johnson, Jr., Steve Lambert, Bryan Hicks, Mike Herrera, Michael Thompson, Joe Straws, Joshua Williams, Mirna Kavar-Herrera, Jill Atherton, and Clayton Seals.

With budget cuts and a reduction in donations, the program needs assistance. So they have organized a concert to be held October 14 at the Church of the Resurrection, 13720 Roe Avenue in Leawood. The Concert will start at 8:00 p.m.

The concert will feature some of the best musicians in the city, including Marilyn Maye, Bobby Watson, Pamela Baskin-Watson, Lonnie McFadden, the Elder Statesmen of Jazz, the Palestine Gospel Singers, and children and staff from the program.

Tickets for the concert are \$25. For information or to purchase tickets for this very worthy musical event, please go to www.upperroomprogram.org or call 913-339-8332. ¶

for the record *continued*

propulsive drumming from Jim White, who keeps things percolating. I listened to this track three times in a row, and every time it seemed like the chart was over way too soon!

Gailey pulls us from the cliff's edge in "Point No Point," which uses a six-note figure on piano as its mantra, while the various sections of the ensemble slowly climb their way up the mountain of music that Gailey has carefully constructed. The tune is decidedly reflective in nature, designed to capture the thoughts and images of one child's unforgettable experiences while visiting relatives in the state of Washington. The effortless guitar work of Steve Kovlacheck holds you perfectly still. Both pensive and powerful, this evocative, moody piece puts you right on the beachfront property.

"Early Light" almost works as a companion piece to the previous tune, as tenor man Don Aliquo uses his tal-

ents to awaken you from a deep slumber to witness a slow rising sun. Indeed, the ensemble moves slowly and gracefully though the opening phrases, as Gailey uses his pen as a paintbrush to create sonic textures that casually float upward as Aliquo sends wisps of air through the bell of his tenor to perfectly capture the essence of the moment.

"In A Big Way" stirs us out of our slumber and shakes us awake and alert to a sprightly blues that serves as a platform for the clarion call of trumpeter Alan Hood, the ballsy baritone sax of Wil Swindler, and bold trombonist Dave Glenn. The delectable smorgasbord of solos is spread over the locked down pocket of rhythm aces Erik Applegate (bass) Jim White (drums) and pianist Dana Landry. This tune is a greasy, Basie-flavored shuffle that'll make you sit up straight, especially after the interlude which serves as a flight for the fancies of Applegate and Hood, respectively.

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