

Performers at Jazz Concert in the hotel Pyramida Thursday July 31, 2008

Allen Hermann (trombone)

Originally from New Orleans, and while still in high school there, Hermann spent his weekends on the LSU campus in Baton Rouge absorbing the formidable talents of Carl Fontana- Al's mentor. In later life, Fontana said of him "nobody gets around the horn any better than Al Hermann".

While in New Orleans, Hermann was featured with the Dukes of Dixieland, called for the New Orleans Symphony, and was a regular at the Roosevelt (Fairmont) Hotel, where he backed such luminaries as Ella Fitzgerald, Tony Bennett, Julie London, and Peggy Lee. Hermann has sided with the Woody Hermann Orchestra, Lionel Hampton, Buddy Morrow, Wild Bill Davidson, Doc Cheatham, Ellis Marsalis, Spike Robinson, Warren Vache, Dave Grusin, Eddie Daniels, Arturo Sandoval, President Bill Clinton and many other outstanding musicians.

Al has recorded with Carl Fontana on the Sea Breeze (Los Angeles) label. The CD, "The Jazz Trombone" (and Al's playing in particular) received a great review in the Journal of the International Trombone Association (July 2005). The CD was selected CD of the month by KUVU, Denver's jazz FM radio station (October 2004), and was called "an amazing, happy, swinging, butt-kicking CD" by Eddied Daniels. In October, 2005, Al performed at the Manly Jazz Festival and the Magnetic Island Jazz Festival in Australia as part of the Bob Montgomery/Al Hermann Quintet where Al was introduced in their brochure as "one of the world's finest trombonists". He did club dates in Mumbai and New Delhi, India in December, 2005, and toured Italy with Bob Montgomery in March 2006 and Australia in 2007. Their latest CD, "On the Brink" (Summit Records, Phoenix) received an outstanding review in the December 2007 Jazz Times and was also selected CD of the Month by KUVU.

Al has been praised by many famous musicians:

"The trombonist I most enjoy since Rosolino. He plays the wheels off the trombone".

Fred Wesley, recording jazz/blues trombonist of James Brown fame

"Dazzled when I heard him. I highly recommend him to you.

Joe Alessi, Principal Trombonist, New York Philharmonic

"One of America's foremost physicists, and an even better trombonist",
President Bill Clinton, Vail, CO, August 1993.

Bob Montgomery (trumpet)

Bob Montgomery is an internationally recognized performing artist who has appeared throughout Europe, Australia, Canada, China, Mexico, Japan, Great Britain and the United States. He has performed in back-up orchestras for such artists as Sammy Davis Jr., Diana Ross, Tony Bennett, Quincy Jones, Nancy Wilson, and many more. Bob toured Europe with Clark Terry's "Big Bad Band", served as artist-in-residence in Adelaide, South Australia, appeared as featured soloist with the Albuquerque Jazz Orchestra for the International Trumpet Guild, and appeared at Town Hall in New York City with Clark Terry for the New York JVC Jazz Festival's tribute to Clark Terry.

Bob's reputation as an educator has earned him many awards, including "Teacher of the Year", "Jazz Educator and Performer of the Year", and "Colorado Jazz Educator of the Year". In 2004 Bob was awarded the Bethany College Alumni of Merit Award for distinguished service in the Arts and in 2007 was inducted into the Garden City, KS (his home town) Hall of Fame. Bob has served both Kansas and Colorado as State IAJE President, and has directed All-State Jazz Ensembles in Colorado, Kansas, Arizona, Iowa, and Oklahoma. Bob was founder and director of Clark Terry's All American Jazz Camp and Rich Matteson's Mile High Jazz Camp. He is Executive Director of Colorado Jazz Workshops, Inc., board member of the "Colorado Gift of Jazz", advisory board member of the Telluride Jazz Celebration, and a member of the board of trustees for the International Foundation for Jazz. Bob is an international artist/clinician for the Yamaha Musical Instrument Company.

František Uhlíř (double-bass)

A graduate of the Brno Conservatoire. He has been a long-time member of Karel Velebný's SHQ, formations of pianist E. Viklický and now he also has his own band known under name F.U.T. (F. Uhlíř Team). He is regarded as a player carrying forward the so-called Czech string bass playing tradition (G. Mraz, M. Vitous). The portfolio of his activities includes cooperation with numerous international groups and soloists as well (East-West Connection, Czech-Norwegian Band, Europlane Orchestra, D.Weckl, B.Moses, S.Costanzo, P.Wilson, B.Bailey, J.Newman, T.Curson, S.Nistico, S.Hamilton, S.Robinson, B.Golbin, D.Gojkovič, S.Gut, C.Stötter, B.Dennerlein, St.Schlegel, D.Moccia, S.Houben, P.Caterine, P.Mikkelborg, etc.).

David Vrobel (1976) (alto sax)

He got his first musical experiences at the ZUŠ in Litvínov. In 1999 he was accepted to the Ježek's conservatory in Prague where he studied with Professor J. Plačka and successfully graduated in 2005. During his studies he already had his professional engagements, mostly in theater orchestras (Divadlo v Celetné , Městské divadlo v Mostě a divadlo v Pardubicích). Besides the theater music David played in blues and jazz bands (R. Trossman, B. Wolf's Bohemia Big Band).

Presently David Vrobel belongs to the professional jazz scene in Prague and regularly performs with several bands (Petr Hanzlík's swing band, Thelonica, V. Hybš orchestra and many others). Since 2005 David is a member/soloist of the "František Uhlíř Team" (F.U.T.).

Adam Tvrdý (guitar)

He is also composer and guitar instructor. He educated at the Konzervatoř Jaroslava Ježka (Jaroslav Jezek's Conservatory in Prague). Attended the Berklee Summer Jazz Workshop in 1997. Awarded for the best soloist at the Jazz Workshop, Frýdlant v Č., Czech Republic in 1995. Professional guitar player since 1997.

Adam has worked with some of the best of the Czech jazz music scene and since 1999 has been working with many jazz musicians in the USA. He had toured the USA, Caribbean, Canada with his jazz trio. In 2002-2003 entered the jazz music scene in New York City and collaborated with some great players, such as Essiet Essiet, Jason Fraticelli, David Phillips - acoustic bass, Joe Rybczyk Jr., John Serry - piano, Tony Moreno - drums, Kendra Shank - vocal, Al Gallodoro - clarinet/ saxophone and others.

Since the spring 2005 Adam lives in the Czech Republic again and works on his musical projects (T-V J Q, Tvrdý-Hejnic-Kořínek trio) as well as he plays in several bands in Prague. He has become a member of the František Uhlíř Team (F.U.T.) in 2005.

Jaromír Helešic (drums)

Born in Uherské Hradiště and brought up in Mikulčice, south Moravia. Since the 1960s he has been living in Prague where he played in a number of jazz formations (Jazz Half Sextet, Jazz Nova) before joining double bassist L. Hulan's Jazz Sanatorium. In the 1970s Jaromír Helešic became one of the best and most sought after drummers in the country (Impuls, Energit L. Andršt, Jazz Q M. Kratochvíla, Pražský Big Band, Milan Svoboda Q, R. Dašek Trio). Jaromír has performed with various music projects all over Europe, India and elsewhere.

Jiří Hlaváč (clarinet)

He graduated from the Academy of Performing Arts in Prague (Professor Říha). He is known primarily as a fine instrumentalist who has excelled as a soloist of various classical and contemporary works, showing not only his brilliant technical virtuosity but also his unique sense of the instruments range of color. He has played as a soloist with many ensembles over the world. He is a holder of the Golden Shield Award, Grammy Classic, title "man of the year", and award from the ABI (American Biographical Institute). Jiří Hlaváč also pays his attention to organizational work. He is a founder and an art director of specially orientated chamber ensemble which, under the name Barock Jazz Quintet, has over the years performed both standard jazz works and compositions by 20th century composers as Aaron Copland, Igor Stravinsky, Darius Milhaud or Leonard Bernstein. His broad range of activities is complemented by his endeavors to popularize music and to organize musical events. He is a chairman of The Committee of the International Radio Competition for Young Musicians Concertino Praga and a chairman of The Prague Spring International Music Competition. He also devotes his time to pedagogical work: Jiří Hlaváč is a Professor at the Music faculty of The Academy of Performing Arts in Prague, where he was a dean from 2000 till 2006. Apart from teaching in Prague, he also often participates as a teacher at international courses and master classes throughout the world.

Tomáš Víšek (piano)

He developed a career as a solo pianist after graduating from the Prague Conservatory (professors V. Kameniková and Z. Kožina), and from the Academy of Music Arts in the class of J. Páleníček and Z. Jílek, He has established his reputation performing both famous and lesser known repertoire, some of which being undeservedly neglected. He has toured throughout the world including Austria, Holland, Switzerland, France, Italy, Japan, and has made several recordings for radio and television and on CDs. Tomáš Víšek won numerous prizes in international competitions. His solo recital in the Prague Spring Festival in 1997 and the further performances there in 2002 and 2003 were met with high acclaim, as were his interpretation of Gershwin's Rhapsody in Blue in the sold out Rudolfinum concert hall in Prague.