

# ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

## 'On the horn'

### Taylor brings fresh jazz sound to Ovens Friday

By Winfred B. Cross  
THE CHARLOTTE POST

Ever heard of Paul Taylor? Don't worry, you'll know exactly who he is after Friday.

Taylor, one of the hottest new jazz saxophone players to hit the scene in years, will share the stage with Keiko Matsui, the No.1-selling female contemporary jazz artist in America, 8 p.m. tomorrow in Ovens Auditorium.

Taylor's part of Matsui's band, in which he's played sax for two years. But he recently stepped out on his own to record *On The Horn* (1 1/2 out of five), his first solo CD.

He got his record deal almost by accident.

"Shortly after I started with Keiko, we played for a bunch of record representatives," Taylor said from his home in Las Vegas. "I was approached by a number of people but I decided to sign with Unity, Keiko's label."

Taylor's work has been accepted very well. His first single "Exotica" spent 12 weeks at No. 2 on Radio & Records New Adult Contemporary chart. His lat-

est single "Until We Meet Again" is No. 2 on the NAC.

Taylor said crafting the album was fun. "Some of the tunes I've had around for a few years, some I wrote just before I recorded," he said. "I just looked at all 10 tunes as a group and decided what felt right. You're really taking a chance because you never know how it will be received, so you go on your own judgment."

Taylor describes his CD as an "r&b jazz mixture, and kind of funky." He wrote all the original tunes and includes two remakes that may raise eyebrows of jazz fans: Chic's "I Want Your Love" and Seal's AIDS anthem "A Prayer For The Dying."

"I chose the Chic song because it's a great song. I just love that song and I thought it would be a great one to cover," he said. "I liked a number of Chic's songs."

"I'm a huge Seal fan. I heard Seal's 'Prayer For The Dying' in the car one day. The melody was so clear. I thought I should do that."

Taylor's influences are extensive. He listened to Earth



PAUL TAYLOR

Wind & Fire, The Ohio Players and other funk groups, which led to him playing in a funk band for a while. "I use a lot of that attitude in my show," he said. "Those were my early influences."

Taylor also listened to David Sanborn, Grover Washington Jr. and the Brecker Bros.

"I don't like to compare myself to anyone but you can hear some of those influences in my music," he said.

Taylor was born in Denver, Colo. He received a four-year scholarship to the University of Nevada Las Vegas, where he studied music performance on saxophone. "That's what

brought me to Las Vegas. I've been here ever since. It's close enough to Los Angeles and offers a great quality of life."

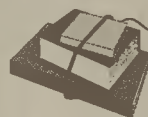
Taylor began playing sax at 7. His younger brother Bentley played the clarinet, but gave it up, pursuing a law career instead.

Tickets for Friday's show are \$22.50, \$19.50 and \$17.50 and are available at Ovens' box office, 2700 E. Independence Blvd. Tickets are also available at TicketMaster locations.



## Cover To Cover

Cold Medina  
Gary Hardwick  
Dutton  
\$22.95



By Jeri Young  
THE CHARLOTTE POST

Gary Hardwick is an interesting author. An attorney turned screen writer, Hardwick has developed screen plays for many television series including Fox's "South Central." He uses all of his talents to make his first novel, "Cold Medina," read like a well written screenplay.

Cold Medina, set in a Detroit police precinct, aptly named "the Sewer," revolves around a psychotic serial killer who is one of Detroit's most notorious drug dealers. Investigator Tony Hill, himself wrestling demons, is given the daunting task of finding a killer that many laud as a hero.

The plot takes many twists and turns. Given the name "Handyman" for his penchant for cutting off his victims hands, the killer gains an almost cult-like following for his work in ridding the streets of a particularly successful black drug cartel, the "Union." Racial tensions erupt, however, as evidence reveals that the killer may be white.

"Medina" is a showcase for Hardwick's talents. Numerous subplots wind through the novel. The "Union" introduces a dangerous, new form of crack cocaine, Medina, which further envelops the city in violence. Crooked cops and political intrigue also abound. A native of Detroit, Hardwick takes an unflinching look at race relations and affirmative action as well as the sensation-alist tendencies of the media.

Hardwick paints and unflatteringly honest portrait of life as a drug dealer, or "roller." There is no glory and there is no fame. Many innocent people lose their lives as a result of their involvement with Union drug dealers.

Unlike many authors, Hardwick's work has no perfect characters. His police officers are as flawed as his "rollers." Hill and his fellow officers wonder, initially, if they should even catch the Handyman. Comments one rookie, "He is doing us a favor."

Hardwick is to be commended for his work. Tough, gritty and sexy, "Medina" takes the reader deep into the drug infested streets of Detroit and into the minds of addict

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# SOUNDS

By Winfred B. Cross

- The Best of Isaac Hayes: The Polydor Years
- The Best of Peaches & Herb
- The Best of Ray, Goodman & Brown
- Isaac Hayes, Freddie Perren, Vincent Castellano, Rahni Song and William

## 'Soul Essential' sets worth a listen

Rhinehart, producers.  
Polydor

☆☆☆

Polydor's Soul Essentials series is one of a long line of re-issues record companies are pumping out to keep up with the demand for the '70s craze.

Polydor has a lot to offer. A plethora of r&b acts - including the Godfather of Soul James Brown - have graced the grooves of hundreds of releases. It's only fitting they give these tunes a fresh spin.

Isaac Hayes' best of really isn't. He was at his best on Stax, wearing chains, winning



ISAAC HAYES

Grammys and Oscars and selling records by the truckloads.

His years at Polydor were after he was broke and everyone had written him off but himself. Hayes certainly wasn't through musically. He had a huge disco hit called "Don't Let Go" which still ain't bad. And his foot stompin' disco delight "Zeke The Freak" will rock a '70s party any night.

What Hayes' set shows is that he is clearly a master at creating grooves and ballads. What he does to James Taylor's "Don't Let Me Be Lonely Tonight" is pure magic.

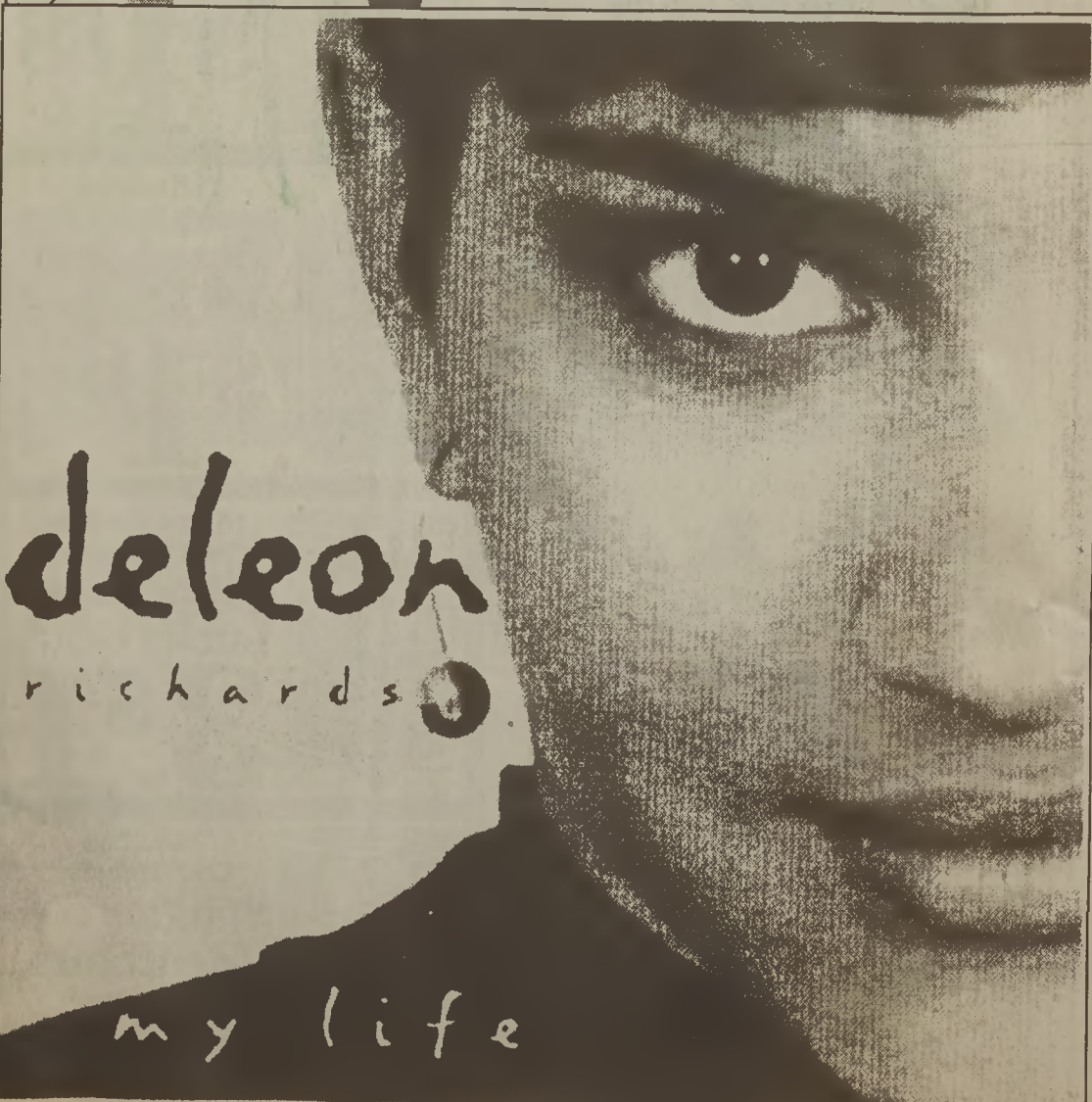
If there ever was a magical disco producer, it's Freddie Perren. He crafted Gloria Gaynor's "I Will Survive," The Sylvers' "Boogie Fever" and, as a member of The Corporation, countless hits for the Jackson Five. His best disco work arguably was done with Peaches & Herb a.k.a Linda Greene and Herb Feemster, later Herb Fame.

The pair didn't have that many hits, but the hits it did have were huge. "Shake Your Groove Thing" will forever be a dance classic. Folk would hurt themselves getting to the dance floor to do the Rock, Hustle or what ever the spirit of the boogie led them to do. "Funtime," its most funky release, wasn't a big hit, but its pulsating baseline and sparse lyrics (was there a disco hit with deep lyrics other than "I Will

Survive?") were the standards of the day.

But nothing compared to the group's mega smash "Reunited." It wasn't disco, but was it ever sugary sweet. The song's airplay was incredible, popping up every other hour on pop and black radio stations. "Reunited" remains a staple during "Quiet Storm"

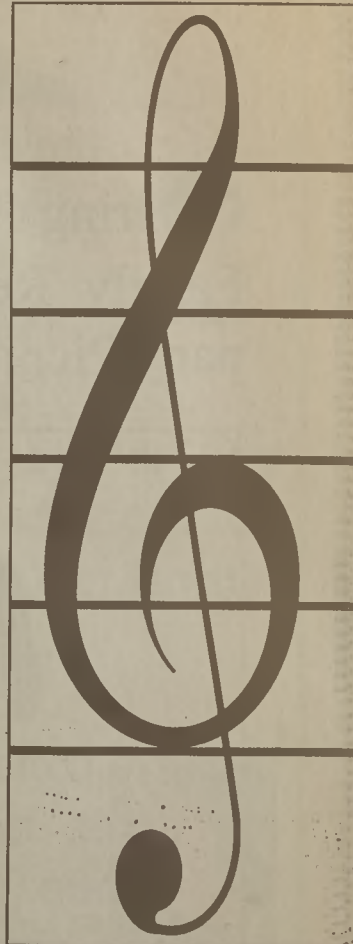
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DELEON RICHARDS

deleon  
richards

my life



RAY, GOODMAN & BROWN