

# Hot summer jazz

photos by Allen Jernigan



## Festival on beach brings back the sublime sound

By TIM STITH  
Tar Heel Contributor

Anyone attending the Summer Jazz Festival this past Thursday would admit that writing a critical review without employing superfluous use of compliments and 'well dones' would be a challenging task. Barring minor technical inconveniences, the Carolina Summer Jazz Festival, sponsored by the Carolina Union and WXYC, flowed from the upbeat sound of bebop, through contemporary guitar and electric bass lines to a final complimentary mixture of vocal and multi-horn sounds.

The Jazz Mongers' uptempo bebop sound ignited the interests of an initially modest-sized crowd that later grew to fill all of Connor lawn and spread across to the Union side of Raleigh Rd.

Steve Wing on keyboards, Rodney Marsh on sax, Daahoud Hassan on drums and Steve Knisley on acoustic bass put together some tunes that created a musical interest in many minds and inspired the audience to stay on to hear Surveyor and Trio.

The Mongers played, among others, some Dexter Gordon numbers and Steve Wing did the vocals on "I'm Taking My Time."

Surveyor came on stage as the crowd was growing to a max and kept the upbeat flowing with a contemporary sound of electric guitar and bass. Some of Surveyor's cuts were written by keyboardist Keith Bridges. As well as Keith, the group is composed of Jim Henderson on sax (sometimes two), John Thompson on a multi-percussion outfit including bells and a gong, Jeff Moe on electric Bass, Jeff Campbell on electric guitar and Tony Bowman on sax.

Surveyor received a very enthusiastic response from the crowd doing a number of Ronnie Laws pieces and a special arrangement of Marvin Gay's "What's Going On."

The final group in this jazz summit was Trio, with very special guests. Bringing outstanding music were Raschim Sahu on acoustic bass, Chip Crawford on keyboards and Chuck Leonard on drums. Raschim, who wrote almost all of the music, plays an acoustic bass *sine qua non*. This intensity and musical expression were a real treat for anyone appreciating jazz. On keyboards, Chip Crawford mirrored Raschim's talent, playing some extraordinary solos. Raschim mentioned before the show that Joe Zawinul of Weather Report has called Chip one of the best young keyboardists in the country. After hearing "Feel Like Making Love" and their very popular version of John Coltrane's "Moment's Notice" that was easy to see.

The special guests added a very unique sound to Trio with Stanley Baird and Al Doctor on reeds; Maurice Wiggins on trumpet, Earl Ford on trombone and three female vocalists. Raschim put a lot of work into original compositions for this festival. Another note on talent, Earl Ford was voted the eighth best trombone player in the country under the category of talent deserving wider recognition by the critics' poll published in *Down Beat* magazine.

This festival was inspired by the upswing of interest in jazz both locally and nationally. As mentioned, a number of local clubs are including more jazz on their agendas because of the interest and, more importantly, because there are so many good jazz bands around. It is popular to say that jazz is coming back; the fact is it never left.



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