

Entertainment



Harvey Mason is a "total musician" not just a drummer. He was born in 1947, in Atlantic City, New Jersey, the son of a drummer in an Army band. At the age of 4, Harvey was given his first drum and proceeded, out of "excitement, passion and inquisitiveness" to destroy it; soon, however, this enthusiasm was channeled more productively, and by the time he hit the eighth grade he was a member of his school orchestra. This led to a semiprofessional jazz trio that played on bills with many top acts in Atlantic City. Through his school years he took formal music lessons, went to the Berklee School of Music in Boston for a year and a half, and then attended the New England Conservatory on a full scholarship, studying a broad range of subjects: theory, composition, arranging, opera, percussion, harmony. At the Conservatory, he led a jazz quartet that also featured keyboard player Jan Hammer.

Before settling into the lucrative life of a studio musician, Mason spent some time on the road with pianists Erroll Garner and George Shearing. About his decision to devote his abilities to session work, Mason said he decided that rather than go and display his art for masses of people out in the streets and in clubs, etc., he would rather have the appreciation of his musical peers. That meant more to him than public approval.

Still, despite Mason's incredible success as a studio sideman, he hasn't made that the extent of his career. As a live performer in the Herbie Hancock group, his powerful, precise drum style formed the foundation for the Hancock style that came to the fore on the *Headhunters* album, the



LP that burst open the jazz-rock fusion dam. He also takes advantage of what little spare time he has to play in loose settings in local clubs alongside musicians like Lee Ritenour. Considering his key contributions to so many albums by other artists as a composer and arranger, as well as drummer, it was inevitable that eventually Mason would cut records of his own.

For his Arista debut in late 1975, *Marching In The Streets*, Mason gathered together some of the best jazz and funk talent on the West Coast, musicians with whom Harvey had been associated for years, such as Lee Ritenour, Chuck Rainey, Hubert Laws, Benny Maupin, and Herbie Hancock. Encouraged by the enthusiastic response to that first solo recorded effort, Mason outdid himself with his second album *Earthmover*, a driving, funky tour de force. *Funk In A Mason Jar* followed, and became his biggest-selling album to that point.

Groovin' You, an even more dramatic advance, featured a gallery of high-calibre players: Stanley Clark, Ray Parker Jr., Verdine White (of Earth, Wind & Fire), David Spinozza, and Bob James. Most of the songs were Mason compositions, and the ensemble did a unique version of Antonio Carlos Jobim's "Wave." M.V.P., the last LP he has

Big Names Back In Sahara Casbar

Big-name, nationally-known entertainment and the Sahara Hotel's famed Casbar Theatre lounge have been "reunited" in yet another entertainment innovation by the Strip hotel.

The Sahara, which bucked the trend to production shows when new owner Paul Lowden took over in August and returned star performers to the Congo showroom, has taken another such bold step in the Casbar lounge.

Peaches & Herb, Herb Fame and Linda Green, best known for their number one national hit record, "Reunited," are inaugurating the new lounge star policy during a special engagement. The move makes the Sahara the only hotel in Las Vegas with "star" entertainment in two separate entertainment rooms.

in two shows nightly, Tuesday through Sunday, in the Casbar alternating with local lounge favorites Doris Troy & Jay Orlando who do three shows nightly. The Sahara Talent Showcase, the longest-running and original talent showcase in Las Vegas, is presented on Monday nights, hosted by comedian Sandy Jackett.

During this exclusive Peaches & Herb engagement, the Sahara will alternate "second" acts to provide a variety of styles of entertainment in the lounge. Troy and Orlando are best known for their jazz and soul music along with some pop hits like Troy's still-popular hit record, "One More Look." Dr. Leon & Staff, the group put together by Boulder City physician Ted Leon, will perform country music favorites. The



Leslie Uggams

Don Rickles and Leslie Uggams open tonight in the Congo Showroom for a nine-day engagement. Singer Bobby Vinton and comedienne Maureen Murphy, in her Las Vegas debut, open April 25 in the Congo.

Peaches & Herb star

group is developing a strong local following among country music fans.

From the Congo Showroom to the Casbar Theatre lounge, only the Sahara Hotel presents so much star entertainment.

produced, includes a number of originals by Mason and his brother Kenny ("On And On," "How Does It Feel," "You And Me"), and all the tracks feature vocals (the lead singers are Deon Estus, Karen Floyd, and the Mason brothers). The whole album lives up to the standard Mason set for himself when he embarked on his solo career for Arista.

Harvey Mason is not just your everyday typical studio musician. His talents are much broader than that as you can well see and he intends to remind you of that in everything he does.

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