

Jazz 'Supergroup' Tops Festival Lineup

A second annual summer jazz festival has been announced for the Mount Charleston Hotel on Aug. 13, headlined by a "supergroup" of musicians known individually within jazz circles: Tom Scott, Freddie Washington, Patrice Rushen, Frank Gambale and Alex Acuna.

Other acts scheduled for the daylong festival are Kim Pansyl, Vital Information and Uncle Festive. The event again will be held outdoors in the hotel parking lot. Gates open at 10 a.m. and the music begins at noon.

General admission tickets

separate solo career.

Saxophonist Tom Scott is the band leader of the Pat Sajak show; guitarist Frank Gambale is a member of Chick Corea's Elektric Band; singer and keyboardist Patrice Rushen composed the sound track for "Hollywood Shuffle"; Alex Acuna was drummer for the seminal jazz-fusion band Weather Report and bassist Freddie Washington has written songs for Whitney Houston and Jeffery Osborne.

Kim Pansyl is perhaps best known in Las Vegas for his work with lounge star Fred-



Patrice Rushen

are \$25 and go on sale Saturday at the hotel, at UNLV's Thomas & Mack Center and Artemus Ham Concert Hall box offices, and the Drum Shoppe, 698 S. Maryland Parkway. Telephone orders will be accepted by calling the hotel, 872-5500.

The headlining "Yamaha Super Group" was assembled by the corporation as a promotional tie-in for its musical instruments. Each member of the band has a

die Bell; he currently performs one-man shows with electronic keyboard programming.

Vital information is the jazz-fusion ensemble headed by ex-Journey drummer Steve Smith. Uncle Festive is a fusion quartet that leads a dual career as part of Barry Manilow's backing ensemble. The quartet has cultivated a local following through a series of club appearances.

ENTOURAGE ENTERTAINS AT HACIENDA'S BOLERO LOUNGE

Entourage has returned to the stage of the Hacienda Resort and Casino's Bolero Lounge. Their original Motown sounds have always been crowd pleasers. The trio is made up of Ed and B.J. Watkins who have performed with the "masters of Motown sound." Their talents were nurtured by playing background and singing for the likes of Diana Ross, Quincy Jones, Stevie Won-

der, Four Tops, and the Pointer Sisters.

Upon coming to Las Vegas, the two connected with Eligah Nesmith, a long time musician and lounge favorite. Eligah's rhythm guitar blends with Ed's keyboard and bass abilities. B.J. plays keyboard and brings her great voice to the group.

Band member Ed comments, "You have to work for a

By Tom Clifford
PM Editorial Services

Before a recent outdoor concert in New York City, Wallace Austin carefully tuned a set of steel drums for the Desperadoes Steel Orchestra. One of Trinidad's expert steel drum tuners, he listened carefully as he alternately pounded the drums with a mallet and a hammer. With storm clouds gathering as quickly as the large audience, Austin kept at his work.

"We're going to chase the rain away," he said, grinning.

The only group in history to capture first place in Trinidad's steel band championship twice in a row, the Desperadoes had come to New York to play a series of concerts sponsored by Philip Morris U.S.A. and *The New York Daily News*. This time, they were intent on capturing American audiences.

The weather, though, wanted to challenge Austin's forecast. Raindrops began to fall by the time the Desperadoes were playing their third piece. The crowd, however, continued to grow. By the time the band kicked into its fourth number, the shower had ended and people hearing steel band music—many for the first time—were dancing in the street.

The world champion Desperadoes truly had chased the rain—and the blues—away. With the sun shining and the joyous music of the steel drum echoing, the Desperadoes had turned a New York City street into a little corner of the Caribbean.

A 50-person orchestra employing 122 steel drums, the Desperadoes display mastery of a wide range of musical styles. From traditional calypso to modern "soca" to delicate classical pieces like "Lord Kitchener's Symphony in G," the band shows the versatility of the steel drum.

"It is an instrument to play any

living. We're really lucky we get to work at what we love best." B.J. adds, "I can relate to anyone in the audience, I sing what the people want. I don't just sing at them."

"Combining our music, marriage and work has worked well," says Ed.

All together, the trio offers the clientel of the Bolero Lounge the best of top 40's,

rock, a blend of their own materials and yes, lots of Motown soul.

Entourage will be appearing at the Bolero Lounge starting July 3 at 9:15 p.m. every night but Wednesday. The Bolero Lounge provides entertainment with no minimum or cover charge. Plan on going early and you can join in on the 5 p.m. to 9 p.m. Fiesta Hours, where you find Margarita bargains

The Desperadoes 'Steel' America



Photo by Allen Morgan Photo Service

Steel drum players move with their music.

kind of music," proudly proclaimed Pat Bishop, the Desperadoes' musical director, in a rich Caribbean accent. "We are always inventing, the more we push the instrument."

The steel drum, or "pan," as it is called by its players, is said to be the 20th century's only new musical instrument. The music evolved in the years immediately following World

War II, when residents of the poorest sections of Trinidad began fashioning drums from used oil barrels. A single drum may have as many as 32 individual notes painstakingly tuned into the pan's surface.

The Desperadoes, from the poverty-stricken neighborhood of Laventille, is one of Trinidad's original steel bands, dating back to the 1940s. Some current members have been in the band for more than 30 years.

"It is very much a working-class ghetto music," said Bishop, the self-described product of a middle-class upbringing. "Occasionally they let a few outsiders in."

The Desperadoes took top honors in the 1987 National Steel Band Competition and again in the 1988 competition, receiving as their prize an invitation to participate in an all-star concert at New York's Carnegie Hall.

"We are proving that we can take street music to the concert halls," Bishop said, "and classical music to the streets." ■

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Photo by Allen Morgan Photo Service

The Desperadoes Steel Orchestra brings Caribbean music to New York's streets.

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