

Entertainment

NOTES FROM THE HILL

Sarah Vaughan-- Gone, But Not Forgotten

By George Wilson

The dictionary defines a legend as a story or some wonderful event, handed down for generations among a people and popularly believed to have a historical basis, distinguished from myth. This definition is a grossly inadequate way of describing the artistry of legendary singer Sarah Vaughan. This great singer ascended to a higher plane after a long battle with lung cancer.

Sarah made her professional debut in the early 1940s with an appearance at New York's famed Apollo Theatre. It was clear to all who heard this magnificent voice that Sarah Vaughan had a gift that would have to be shared with the world. During her half century in show business, she performed with many of the best musicians around. They include Earl "Fatha" Hines, Billy Eckstine, Count Basie, and Charlie Parker. When you evaluate the prowess of a singer, one of the primary considerations is range. Sarah Vaughan's voice had the same versatility

that is contained in the clarinet.

When I heard about Ms. Vaughan's death, my immediate reaction was one of reflection. I started thinking about my favorite songs and where I was when this music entered my life. For instance, when she released "Misty," I was employed as a disc jockey at a jazz station in New Orleans. The public's response was so overwhelming that I was forced to play this particular song on a nightly basis.

Those who were attracted to America's classical music were well aware of Sarah and her talent. Unfortunately, the commercial world was slow to recognize her artistry. This is supported by the fact that she did not win a Grammy until 1980. But she was known throughout the world as the best female jazz vocalist.

Quincy Jones' latest effort, "Back On the Block," features a brief appearance by Sarah and other jazz greats. This was an important cameo appearance because it exposed a



Sarah Vaughan

younger audience to her genius.

Sarah has left us on the physical plane. However, she lives on in the work of some of the younger singers who must continue to carry the baton that was passed to them by such a noble long distance runner.

I will miss her magnificent voice. I will miss her regal stage presence. Fortunately, a large number of her recordings are available, which means that I will have to increase my dosage of Sarah Vaughan's soothing music. A great voice has been taken from us, but her legacy continues.

We all have our favorite Sarah Vaughan selection. I have many, but my favorite

was recorded on May 18, 1950. It is titled "Goodnight, My Love."

Goodnight, my love, the tired old moon is descending,

Goodnight, my love, my moment with you now is ending.

It was so heavenly holding you close to me.

It will be heaven to hold you again in a dream.

The sun above has promised to meet us tomorrow.

Til then, my love, how dreamy the new day will seem.

So for the present, dear, we'll have to part.

Sleep tight, my love.

Goodnight, my love.

Remember that you're my sweetheart.

Reggae Sunsplash Coming To Artemus Ham Hall

1990 marks the start of a new decade and the resurgence of Reggae music, which will be visiting us here in Las Vegas on Tuesday, June 5 at Artemus Ham Hall. A new generation of performers and fans continue to fuel Jamaica's most successful export - Reggae Sunsplash.

What began six years ago as a touring off-shoot of Jamaica's Reggae Sunsplash Festival (now in its thirteenth year) has become an event unto itself in the United States. Jamaica's Prime Minister Michael Manley stated, "Reggae (Sunsplash 1990) exhibits a dynamic musical form which reflects the creative energy of the Jamaican people."

And this year Reggae Sunsplash 1990 will carry on the tradition of fusing a unique blend of the finest musicians into a continuous four hour festival of music, food and crafts. From hip-hop to rap to the traditional reggae beat,

this year's tour has it all! The event will bring to stages across America the talents of Burning Spear, Freddie McGregor, Marcia Griffiths, Shinehead, U-Roy, Shelly Thunder and the 809 Band along with seasoned Sunsplash Master of Ceremonies Tommy Cowan.

Good seats are still available at Artemus Ham Box Office, Caribbean Lifestyle, Calamity's Box Office and all Ticketron locations for their only visit to Las Vegas this year. Perhaps one of Synergy's producers, Tony Johnson, sums it up best when he says, "Sunsplash and Reggae music have grown hand in hand over the last decade and have given people a chance to experience the culture of Jamaica in their own backyards."

If you've been waiting for excitement and entertainment, a concert like Reggae Sunsplash is just what the body desires.

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