

Tisdale perfect compliment to awe-inspiring talents of Najee

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Sentinel-Voice

Under a star-filled sky Friday evening, Texas Station presented yet another superb evening of jazz. In his second Las Vegas appearance this year, brilliant instrumentalist, composer and producer, Najee presented the crowd with his gift of horn mastery. As if Najee was not enough, the opening act was the "guitar finger fox" Wayman Tisdale.

As accomplished on stage as he is on the court, ex-NBA star Tisdale has done what many sports heroes have tried and failed — achieving a career in the entertainment field.

"Las Vegas can we give you a party tonight?" asked Tisdale. He was accompanied by three pieces, Tom Braxton on sax, Nate Robinson on drums and musical director Jerry Harris on keyboard. The group played together as if they had grown up living next door to each other.

Tisdale and company rocked. Sax player Braxton impressed. Braxton, 21, who appeared to be anchored to the stage by the weight of his musical talent reached into the depths of his soul and produced the sounds of a giant. He and Tisdale traded music like an old dance couple, dipping, turning and complimenting each other at every musical turn.

The group jammed on remakes

of two '70's classics, Seals & Crofts "Summer Breeze" and the Norman Connors/Michael Henderson "You Are My Starship".

When Tisdale declared this "not a regular jazz concert" they broke with the medley of popular reggae hits. The crowd roared when Tisdale did the piece "Breakfast at Tiffany's." When he broke that bass down in a deep seductive move, by the time we left Tiffany's, all the ladies were saying "yes."

It was almost beyond belief that we still had yet another jazz great to go. The Texas Station was not only a gracious host but also a generous one. Every seat was an excellent seat to see Najee's entrance. Entering from the rear, like the Pied Piper. He strolled throughout the crowd captivating old fans and enticing the new with his unique horn sound.

An excellent reedsmith, Najee was complimented by Mo Daniels on piano, P.J. Morgan on keyboards, Alvin White on guitar, Blues Webb on drums, and Kevin Walker on bass.

Najee's sound is highly polished. His performance is never a surprise. You will receive the best of his works and he will display his musical excellence complimented by a well-selected group of musicians. This concert was no different.

When they did "Room To Breathe" from his latest CD Morning Tenderness, it was like sitting in the studio. The vocals and piano solo of Daniels was a mellow blend of pure sound. He also did the remake of Stevie Wonder's "For Your Love" giving us the sensation of his flute. This piece was backed up by a mixture of twinges, beats, melodies and all forms of ear candy that literally created a melodic fusion.

Najee, who attended the renowned New England Conservatory of Music for four years gave us a sample of the beauty of classical music, declaring to the audience, "that's some hard stuff."

Raised in the Jamaica Queens's section of New York, Najee's 1986 hit "Najee's Theme" took us to the streets, with a flurry of dance beats enhanced by Morgan on synthesizer giving us that Roger Troutman flashback.

Najee did what he always does, he gives you all he can, all he has, and when you leave, you cannot wait to see him again. To sample his latest CD "Morning Tenderness," check out <http://www.najeenetwork.com>.

Tisdale's glove of jazz funk was a perfect fit for the smooth hand of Najee. The blend of artistry was the perfect formula for an unforgettable evening of jazz.



NAJEE

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