

Jazz

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experienced musicians. They played from several of their releases including "Other Side Of Midnite," "Keep It Right There," and their latest CD, "Next To You."

Their version of "My Cherie Amour" was unique and almost unrecognizable by it's opening, but when it slid wide open into the piece, someone from the crowd screamed, "hurt me!" The Bold burst of musical energy tempered by groove-pumped melodies brought the crowd out of their chaise lounges for a little winding.

Each tune brought forth increasing musical power, so much so that it brought local jazz enthusiast Shirley Sutton down front, walker and all. With the help of her jazz loving friend, Gloria Brittan, Shirley was an example of what the force of music could do. "I may not be able to walk, but thank God, I can dance."

The drummer did some things with the sticks that I thought were impossible, and no matter how skilled and seasoned they all were, the drummer seemed to tie it all together. I learned later that Jabari and Gerard Gibbs had just released a CD together, "To Be Or Not To B-3."

As darkness began to settle in, the air began to chill. Next in line, Everett Harp covered us like a warm blanket. He opened humbly, expressing his desire to give the love back to us through his piece, "Right Back Atcha," from his latest, "For The Love," CD. George Benson, Al Jarreau and Richard Elliott were co-



Sentinel-Voice photos by Ramon Savoy

Locals lounge as Pam Williams plays her alto saxophone.

writers on this and six of the other tracks on the CD.

Flanked by two keyboardist, Tom Wyatt and Scott Tibbs, bass John Menzano, lead guitarist Ray Fuller, drummer Herman Matthews and percussionist Rock Dedrick, the sweet sound of the horn, warm and smooth, took the chill out of the air.

Harp spoke with the audience, expressing his appreciation for our presence and inviting us to come closer. But by then, everyone was as smug as a bug in a rug, not too many moved. It was like sun-bathing all day in pure jazz, now all you want to do is just lay there and take it all in.

Harp had the answer for that when they did "Strutt," from the "Common Grounds" CD. Opening with a funky guitar intro, Harp introduced "Strutt" as "a way to shake the grass off your butt." Sweating now from the intense affair he was having with his horn, he always reached out to the audience through conversation to make sure we were all still with

him. His desire to touch us with his music became so intense, it brought him out into the audience, giving a little bit of himself at each stop. He gave a little congratulatory love to local radio personality, Cat Daddy, recently filling a 105.7 jazz spot weekdays from 2 p.m. until 7 p.m.

Like the Pied Piper of jazz, he made his rounds throughout the faithful diehard jazz lovers who remained for the entire show. He left us with his version of the Marvin Gaye hit, "What's Goin' On." It was full, sexy, and a great way to exit.

I'm sure you know by now that the chill had taken a permanent place. We lost quite a few before the Yellow Jackets appeared, but some of us don't leave until the last jazz note has been played.

If you are a Yellow Jacket fan, then you know they have been together since the 80s. Listening to them is like sitting in a recording studio. All the songs are studio perfect-keyboard, horn, drum and guitar, and a string of hits dating back to their early jazz rock fusion days.

Funky in a lazy sort of way, I wasn't sure if it was the cool air or the lack of cheering jazz lovers that kept them pretty low-key.

Don't get me wrong, the Yellow Jackets remain one of the best jazz-rock fusion influences in the world of jazz, but after experiencing musicians who were thirsty for their positioning in this arena, their laid-back delivery let me down slightly.

They played from their album, "Blue Hats," and from several of their string of recording successes with studio delivery, but by now, we all wanted to go out on the sweat of someone's jazz mastery.

The "Brothas" of Big Time Entertainment gave us a glimpse of who would be calling the future shots in the world of jazz. The lineup was insightful, bringing forth some of the best in the indus-



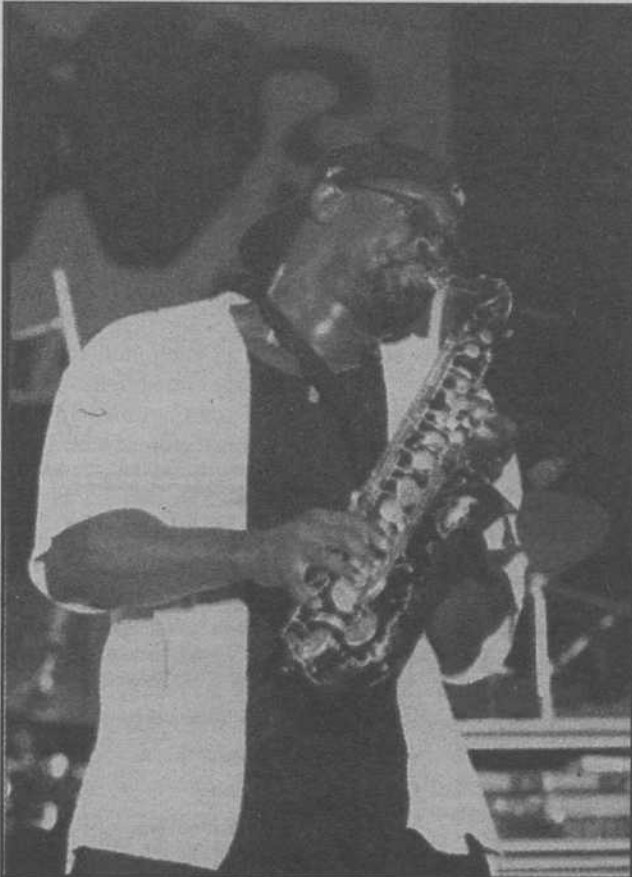
Saxophonist Marion Meadows wows Shirley Sutton with his musical stylings. Sutton danced and pranced as Meadows belted out soulful harmonies on his soprano saxophone.

try, an education on many who usually accompany a star, truly being stars themselves.

I hope the lack of support

by all you jazz lovers did not discourage the "Brothas" of Big Time Entertainment. Make sure you check out their production the next time they

step out there. Take it from a jazz lover—they are definitely on the right track, and I hope their train always stops here first.



The bespectacled Everett Hart accentuates his live jazz performance with a little body English.

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