

3-15-2011

Marshall University Music Department Presents a Senior Recital, Luke Miller, saxophone

Luke Miller
Marshall University

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Miller, Luke, "Marshall University Music Department Presents a Senior Recital, Luke Miller, saxophone" (2011). *All Performances*. Book 403.
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DEPARTMENT of MUSIC

presents a

Senior Recital
Luke Miller, saxophone

assisted by
Rod Elkins, drum set
Wes Hager, guitar
Jason Mitchell, saxophone
Austin Seybert, trombone
Craig Burlétic, bass
Zack Arbogast, piano

Tuesday, March 15, 2011
Jomie Jazz Forum
8:00 p.m.

This program is presented by the College of Fine Arts through the Department of Music, with the support of student activity funds. For more information about this or other music events, please call (304) 696-3117, or view our website at www.marshall.edu/cofa/music.

Program

<i>Nutville</i>	Horace Silver's (b. 1928)
<i>Ceora</i>	Lee Morgan (1938-1972)
<i>Bebop</i>	Dizzy Gillespie (1917-1983)
<i>After the Rain</i>	John Coltrane (1926-1967)
<i>The Eternal Triangle</i>	Sonny Stitt (1924-1982)
Intermission	
<i>Goodbye Pork Pie Hat</i>	Charles Mingus (1922-1979)
<i>Rhythm-a Ning</i>	Thelonious Monk (1917-1982) arr. Luke Miller
<i>Nature Boy</i>	Eden Ahbez (1908-1995) Nat Cole (1919-1965)
<i>Moanin'</i>	Bobby Timmons (1935-1974)

This recital is being presented in partial fulfillment of the requirements for a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree in jazz studies. Mr. Miller is a student in the saxophone studio of Dr. Edwin Bingham.

Moanin, a bluesy, gospel-like jazz standard, was composed by pianist Bobby Timmons (1935-1974) while he was a member of the Jazz Messengers under leadership of Art Blakey (1919-1990). This wildly successful tune features a call and response melody which invokes a preacher's sermon and a congregation's response of "Amen!" In 1947, Blakey founded the Jazz Messengers, a group he would stay with for the rest of his life. It wasn't until 1956 when pianist Horace Silver left the group that leadership fell to Blakey. From there, he would become the tenured member of a band famous for picking young jazz musicians and boosting their careers. Musicians such as saxophonist Wayne Shorter and trumpeter Lee Morgan as well as Freddie Hubbard, Keith Jarrett, Chuck Mangione and Wynton Marsalis all got their start with the Messengers. By 1958, the year *Moanin* was written, the line-up included Morgan on trumpet, saxophonist Benny Golson, Jymie Merritt on bass and Timmons playing piano. Timmons would leave the group the next year to pursue a career with Cannonball Adderley, rejoin the group for a year and finally suffer a difficult and largely unsuccessful solo career.

Lee Morgan (1938-1972), however, had a very successful (and tragically short) career after leaving the Messengers. Morgan would stay with the group, taking a three year break between 1961 and 1964, until 1965 when he decided to pursue his solo freelance career. It was in this same year that Lee Morgan would record *Ceora* on his album *Cornbread*. The soft melody is a perfect fit with the laid back bossa-nova feel originally provided by pianist Herbie Hancock, bassist Larry Ridley and drummer Billy Higgins. The group also featured Jackie McLean and Hank Mobley on alto and tenor sax respectively. Morgan would continue playing and recording until 1972, when he was unexpectedly killed on-stage in Slugs, a New York nightclub. As he was just walking on the stage for a second set of the night, a lady friend he had just had an altercation with entered the nightclub, called his name and shot him in the chest ending his successful career as well as his life.

The tune *Bebop* was recorded by Charlie Parker (1920-1955) and Dizzy Gillespie (1917-1983) on June 22, 1945. The blazing tempo of this piece would come to be a staple of the bebop genre. The genre got its name when Gillespie was trying to explain the phrasing of two notes; notes well-known to the Bebop players, the flatted fifth (or tritone) interval. There is no clear start to the bebop era of jazz though the origins came at the beginning of the 1940s during after-hours jam sessions at Minton's Playhouse in Harlem. Musicians in addition to Parker and Gillespie most associated with bebop's origins include Kenny Clarke (1914-1985), Max Roach (1924-2007), Bud Powell (1924-1966), and Thelonious Monk (1917-1982).

John Coltrane (1926-1967) is well known for having three distinct periods in his solo career. The first would be his change-running period. The continuous sixteenth-note runs without pause, or "sheets of sound" as critic Ira Gitler would refer to it would culminate into his wildly successful *Giant Steps* (1959) album. His next period saw a move from fast-paced improvisation over an unrelenting series of chord changes to a more relaxed, modal approach. For instance, instead of playing over a new chord every two beats, perhaps he would only play over one or two chords for the entirety of the tune, greatly expanding his artistic potential. Famous albums from this period would include *My Favorite Things* (1960) and *Impressions* (1961). Coltrane's last period, often referred to as his experimental phase, would bring about more emphasis on tone colors and energetic intensity rather than chord changes or even rhythm and tuning. Examples of this time period could include his *Ascension* album as well as *Om* and *Meditations* all recorded in 1965. *After the Rain* was composed during his modal period, appearing on his *Impressions* album. The tune is centered over two main key centers and its simple melody makes it easy to visualize a quiet, private moment following a hard rainstorm.

In 1957, six musicians: Dizzy Gillespie, saxophonists Sonny Rollins (b. 1930) and Sonny Stitt (1924-1982), pianist Ray Bryant (b. 1931) and his bassist brother Tommy Bryant (1930-1982), as well as drummer Charlie Persip (b. 1929) got together to record an album which they would call *Sonny Side Up*. This album featured four tunes: *On the Sunny Side of the Street*, *Eternal Triangle*, *After Hours* and *I Know That You Know*. *Eternal Triangle* was written by Stitt and on the original recording featured a tenor battle between Rollins and Stitt that still stands as one of the most impressive examples of virtuosity on the saxophone. Sonny Stitt got his start on the alto sax, comparable in almost every way stylistically to Charlie Parker. Whether or not he changed his instrument due to this comparison is debatable but in either case his switch to tenor would be a change he would stick with for the rest of his life.

Lester Young (1909-1959) was one of the most influential musicians to the early development of jazz. His sound was so advanced for his time that he influenced even Charlie Parker. When he died in 1959, bassist Charles Mingus (1922-1979) was devastated. His devastation would motivate him to compose and dedicate a tune to him. The title, *Goodbye Pork Pie Hat*, refers to the style of cap that Young was fond of wearing. The album featuring this tune would be Mingus *Ah Um* which was released the same year as Young's death. Mingus, a native of Los Angeles was as famous for his strong interest in race and politics as his compositions. Just months before his death, he worked with singer Joni Mitchell (b. 1943) on lyrics to his jazz standard.

When Charlie speaks of Lester,
 You know someone great has gone.
 The sweetest swinging music man
 Had a Porky Pig hat on.
 A bright star in a dark age
 When the bandstands had a
 thousand ways
 Of refusing a black man admission,
 Black musician.
 In those days they put him in an
 Underdog position,
 Cellars and chittlins'.
 When Lester took him a wife,
 Arm and arm went black and white,

And some saw red
 And drove them from their hotel bed.
 Love is never easy.
 It's short of the hope we have for
 happiness
 Bright and sweet.
 Love is never easy street.
 Now we are black and white,
 Embracing out in the lunatic New
 York night.
 It's very unlikely we'll be driven out of
 town
 Or be hung in a tree.
 That's unlikely...

Written by Thelonious Monk (1917-1982) and debuted on Mulligan Meets Monk in 1957, *Rhythm-a-Ning's* title is a play on its chord changes: "rhythm changes." The term "rhythm changes" implies that the chord changes are the same as George Gershwin's (1898-1937) *I Got Rhythm*. Other tunes included with this description include Charlie Parker's *Anthropology*, *Oleo* by Sonny Rollins and The Flintstone's television theme. *Eternal Triangle* is also a rhythm changes tune, though with different chord changes on the bridge. The standard rhythm changes bridge has only four chords two measures apart circling around the cycle of fifths. The bridge of *Eternal Triangle* has twelve chords descending in half steps first at an interval of one measure and concluding at a two beat interval.

This arrangement of *Rhythm-a-Ning*, done by Mr. Miller features a favorite scale of Monk, the whole-tone scale, as well as Coltrane Changes (named after the changes invented by John Coltrane on his Giant Steps album) on the bridge also added by Mr. Miller.

Nature Boy was published in 1947 by Eden Ahbez and made famous by Nat Cole when he recorded it the next year. It would be recorded by numerous other jazz musicians in the future including John Coltrane in 1965. The album The John Coltrane Quartet Plays which *Nature Boy* is featured on is pivotal in Coltrane's artistic development. The recording was made between A Love Supreme and Ascension placing it right in the middle of his transition into his experimental period.

The lyrics written by Ahbez speak of a "very strange, enchanted boy" who "travelled very far over land and sea" spreading one message: "the greatest thing you'll ever learn is just to love and be loved in return." Coltrane's recording tells the story of this enchanted boy, first through the

melody. The setting then changes; a different rhythmic feel provided by bassists Art Davis and Jimmy Garrison, pianist McCoy Tyner, and drummer Elvin Jones allude to the exotic places the nature boy visited. Finally, a recapitulation of the original melody brings the story back with a greater understanding of his message.

There was a boy
 A very strange, enchanted boy.
 They said he wandered very far,
 Very far,
 Over land and sea.
 A little shy, and sad of eyes,
 But very wise was he.

And then one day,
 One magic day he came my way
 And as we spoke of many things,
 Fools and kings,
 This he said to me,
 "The greatest thing you'll ever learn,
 Is just to love and be loved in return."

After leaving the Jazz Messengers to pursue a solo career, Horace Silver's (b. 1928) group would become a training ground for young musicians the same way the Messengers would be. *Nutville* was recorded in 1965 for Silver's album The Cape Verdean Blues named after his father's birthplace in Cape Verde. The album featured trumpeter Woody Shaw (1944-1989), trombonist J. J. Johnson (1924-2001), saxophonist Joe Henderson (1937-2001), bassist Bob Cranshaw (b. 1932) and drummer Roger Humphries (b. 1944). *Nutville* switches between a fast samba and a swing section and features a closely harmonized melody which Silver was famous for. His compositions usually involved a feel that reminded him of his childhood (most often a samba or bossa-nova feel.) Most melodies were simultaneous lines separated by a perfect fourth or fifth giving them a raw, bluesy sound. Silver is currently living in California; his last album Jazz Has a Sense of Humor was released in 1998.

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