

Jazz Groups in Champaign-Urbana

Barrington Coleman Trio Mainstream group incorporates classical influences, now doing more original material by bassist Bill Koehler and pianist/singer Coleman.

Boneyard Veteran brass frontline features slide and valve trombones taking straightforward approaches to popular and jazz standards.

Briggs/Houchin Group Duo highlights Montgomery-style master guitarist, solid young bassist, sometimes joined by drums.



Bryan Holloway Somethin' Classic piano trio plays standards and Holloway originals.

Bud Vandever's Jazz Band Well seasoned musicians do foot-tapping, hand-clapping takes on the good ol' good ones.

Buick All-Stars Renamed in honor of former leader Dave Branning's preferred mode of transportation, trio and guests continue to provide a danceable mix of blues, swing, and jazz.



Chambana Quintet with deep local roots specializes in hard bop standards from 50s and 60s.

Champaign Public Schools jazz bands Sam Hankins' Edison Middle and John Curry's Central High jazz bands can swing! (And they have the awards to prove it.)

Chip McNeill Quartet Leader's amazing sax chops bring intensity to modern jazz standards and originals.



Craig Russo Latin Jazz Project Springfield-based percussionist/leader and area sidemen are a regular in the Zorba's rotation.

Desafinado

Consisting of percussion, strings, vibes, flute, and vocals, C-U's premier interpreters



of the Antonio Carlos Jobim songbook.

Don Heitler Local piano legend helps the spaghetti go down Wednesday nights at The Great Impasta.



Ear Doctor Unique instrumentation, including synthesizer and tuba, is ideal for leader Tom Paynter's

singular compositions.

Finga Lickin' Harmonica-led quartet and guests treat big, young audiences to rootsy, danceable grooves every Monday at The Office.

Gary Cziko Jazz Ensemble Multi-instrumentalist (sometimes simultaneously!) puts together assortments of friends for jazz with a sense of humor.

Heartland Jazz Orchestra Classy Bloomington-based big band is led by C-U's Tom Wirtel.

Hippus Campus Upbeat postbop from UI music students and a chemistry postdoc. That's right: a postbop postdoc.

Illini Jazz Band UI music school sponsors elite, local high school jazzers.

In Your Ear Big Band Peter Roubal-led Parkland College group provides more modern, progressive complement to Hutchens-led Parkland Big Band.

Jason Finkelman's Nu Orbit Ensemble

Percussionist/improviser Jason Finkelman and core unit invite wide-ranging guests on expeditions into uncharted territory.



Jazz Mayhem Jeff Helgesen's former Trumpet Mayhem now includes sax and trombone, plays tasty four-part arrangements with plenty of blowing.

Jeff Helgesen Jazz Quartet and Quintet

Formidable trumpeter leads tight group in straightahead, hard-bop takes on standards.



JQ Reunions pack 'em in at the Iron Post when trumpeter Ray Sasaki returns to lock horns with trombonist Morgan Powell.

New Orleans Jazz Machine Seasoned purveyors of traditional jazz need to get together more. Come on, guys!



ParaDocs Highly educated veterans play standards in the classic swing style with vocals.

Parkland Big Band John Hutchens-led ensemble specializes in classic swing charts, often featuring singer Kyle Kimbrough.



Parkland College Combo Kevin Hart-led jazz improv students play occasionally at Iron Post.

Pocket Big Band Six horns, rhythm, and vocals recreate the big band sound.



Rachael Lee and Don Heitler Singer and pianist read each other's minds through standard tunes.

Sean Parsons Trio (aka PCM Trio) Young pianist is new to the C-U scene, also sings and writes.

Shabmo Sextet A new assortment of local stalwarts. Three-horn front line and rhythm play originals by Tom "Shab" Wirtel (trumpet) and Peter "Mo" Roubal (sax).

Slackers Veteran trumpeter Tom Wirtel and his groove-oriented former UI students still get together for reunions.

Sudden Sound Project Percussionist/improviser Jason Finkelman's newest enterprise aims at developing a community of improvisers in C-U.

Tom Paynter Group Usually a trio plus one, plays modern standards a la Monk and Mingus in addition to leader's originals. Becomes trio plus one plus another one when Paynter performs amazing flute/piano feat.

UI Grad Jazz Combo Variable assemblages of students provide jam session atmosphere.

University of Illinois jazz bands #1 Chip McNeill-led ensemble plays advanced lab charts and student/faculty originals featuring top soloists. #2 and #3 are more training oriented, focus on big band standards.

University of Illinois combos Students

HIGH DIVE 19+ to enter

located @ 51 main street (downtown) champaign info@thehighdive.com phone 217-359-4444

LOCAL H

SATURDAY/SEPTEMBER 20TH
EARLY SHOW 7:30-10PM



Bryan Holloway
Somethin' Classic piano trio plays standards and Holloway originals.

Bud Vandever's Jazz Band Well seasoned musicians do foot-tapping, hand-clapping takes on the good ol' good ones.

Buick All-Stars Renamed in honor of former leader Dave Branning's preferred mode of transportation, trio and guests continue to provide a danceable mix of blues, swing, and jazz.

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Kevin Carrier Fo'tet and Fivetet Students take modern approaches to standards with a jam session atmosphere.

Kevin Hart Quartet Vibist/pianist leader, now Normal-based, still brings classic, contemporary, latin, and original jazz to C-U from time to time.

LaMonte Parsons Duo and Trio

LaMonte Parsons Experience Veteran guitarist leads varying personnel in jazz standards and originals, as well as blues and R&B.



Medicare 7, 8, or 9 Well-placed sources say it's too early to pronounce death of C-U's beloved traditional/Dixieland group.

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University of Illinois combos Students work in a variety of instrumental settings and jazz styles, perform regularly at Iron Post. Play well with others.

Vicki Capo and Bill French Another longstanding telepathic singer/piano duo performing standards with energy and polish.

Virtues and Virtues Quartet Led by guitarist/singer Bruiser, their blues and swing jazz make you want to jump.

Weasel Dreams

Quintet Trumpet/sax frontline and rhythm take energetic, avant-tinged approach to modern tunes. Lots of serious blowing.



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located @ 51 main street (downtown) champaign info@thehighdive.com phone 217-359-4444 www.thehighdive.com

LOCAL H

SATURDAY SEPTEMBER 20TH
EARLY SHOW 7:30-10PM

ADVANCE TICKETS ON SALE NOW!
Bacca Cigar Co. (Round Barn Centre), Bogarts Casablanca (Campustown), Record Swap (Downtown Urbana), Dandelion (Downtown Champaign), Skins-n-Tins (Downtown Champaign), and also online

Jazz singer returns to C-U

■ Bridgewater has won Tony, 2 Grammys

By MELISSA MERLI
News-Gazette Staff Writer

URBANA — Since leaving Champaign-Urbana in 1970, jazz vocalist Dee Dee Bridgewater has enjoyed an amazing career.

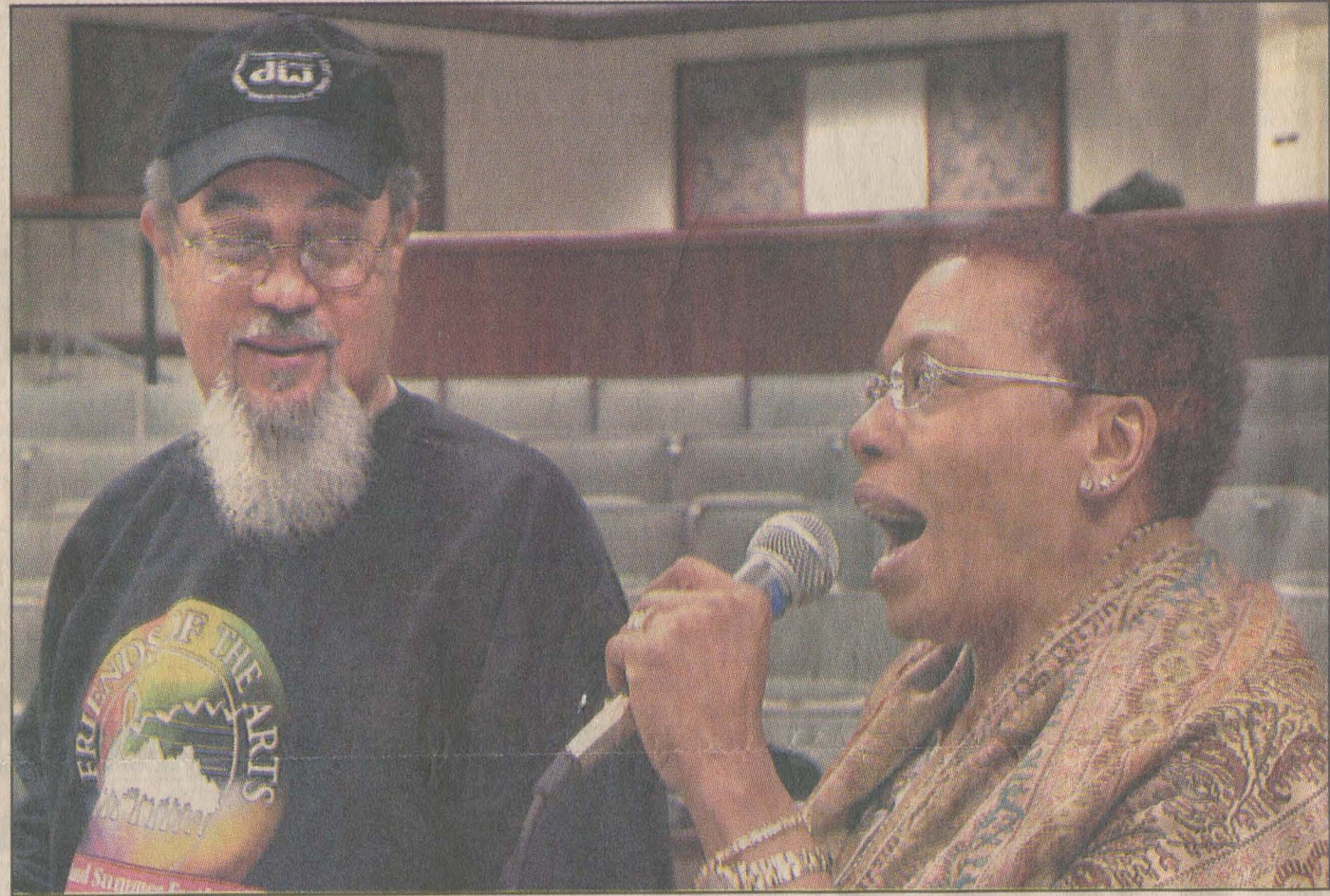
She's won critical acclaim for her albums. She's won two Grammy awards and a Tony for best featured actress in a musical — in 1975, in "The Wiz," the first musical in which she ever appeared.

She's racked up a number of other awards and nominations, among them a Laurence Olivier Award nomination in 1987 for best actress in a musical, for essentially channeling the late great Billie Holiday in a London production of "Lady Day."

She's acted in a John Sayles film and in other movies and television. She hosted radio and television programs in France, where she lived for 15 years and maintains a home, just outside Paris. And since 2001, she has hosted NPR's "JazzSet," succeeding Branford Marsalis.

Now Bridgewater is back in town, ready to appear onstage Saturday night at the Krannert Center for the Performing Arts with her first husband, the jazz trumpeter Cecil Bridgewater, in a concert that is part of the center's Jazz Threads initiative.

"It's going to be really exciting," Dee Dee Bridgewater said after arriving in Champaign on Thursday. "I just told Cecil, 'Do what you want. Just make sure I know the song and I'll sing it.' He's



Robin Scholz/The News-Gazette

Jazz vocalist Dee Dee Bridgewater and her first husband, trumpeter Cecil Bridgewater, rehearse together Thursday at Smith Hall on the University of Illinois campus in Urbana. The

two, along with saxophonist Ron Bridgewater, will give a performance Saturday in the Tryon Festival Theatre at the Krannert Center for the Performing Arts.

Bridgewaters to perform Saturday

If you go ...

What: Jazz vocalist Dee Dee Bridgewater, trumpeter Cecil Bridgewater and saxophonist Ron Bridgewater in concert with the University of Illinois Concert Jazz Band.

When: 7:30 p.m. Saturday.

Where: Tryon Festival Theatre, Krannert Center for the Performing Arts.

Tickets: \$25 for the general public, \$24 for senior citizens and students and \$19 for UI students and youths. Few tickets remain.

Call 333-6280.

with Dexter when he was playing at some club. I used to sing with Sonny Rollins. We'd do society gigs in Manhattan.

"I was this little darling of all these musicians. I didn't know this was something special. I grew up thinking everyone sang jazz, and I thought all jazz singers scatted. I just thought they were normal things until I got into the big world, after I stopped singing and accepted the role in 'The Wiz.' Then I was able to pull



film and in other movies and television. She hosted radio and television programs in France, where she lived for 15 years and maintains a home, just outside Paris. And since 2001, she has hosted NPR's "JazzSet," succeeding Branford Marsalis.

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"It's going to be really exciting," Dee Dee Bridgewater said after arriving in Champaign on Thursday. "I just told Cecil, 'Do what you want. Just make sure I know the song and I'll sing it.' He's taken songs from my latest CD ('This is New') and turned them into orchestral and big-band arrangements.

"It'll be nice for us to be on the stage again because, really, I kind of started out here. This is where my career started."

It began after John Garvey, leader of the jazz band at the University of Illinois, heard Denise "Dee Dee" Garrett sing in the late '60s at a collegiate jazz festival at Notre Dame. She was then a freshman at Michigan State University.

Garvey arranged a transfer for her to the UI. After coming here, Bridgewater, who had been an English major, "just took" classes, saying that at that point her "burning desire to be in college" flew

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out the window.

"I just saw Cecil in that band and I thought, 'Hmm, hmm, I'm going to get next to that guy.' That was my intention when I came down here, unbeknownst to anyone. I stayed in school a semester and dropped out."

She continued, though, to sing with the UI Jazz Band and with jazz combos. She and Cecil married June 13, 1970, and moved to New York, where they both joined the Thad Jones/Mel Lewis big band.

"That was really my learning period, that four years I was with Thad Jones/Mel Lewis, when Cecil was in the band, writing my arrangements," she said. "Singing

with these hot cats! I was like 20. I was a baby."

After touring Europe with the band, Bridgewater became obsessed with returning there. She did, working there often and living in France from 1986 to 1999. It was then that she and her third — and she says her last — husband, Jean-Marie Durand, moved to Henderson, Nev., to be near her mother.

Joining Thad Jones/Mel Lewis was her entree into the jazz world.

"Because I started out with this band and everybody knew this band, I met and sang with everybody," she said. "It was no big deal to sing with Dexter Gordon, no big deal to go and hang out

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She almost lost that role after her second husband, Gilbert Moses, was fired as director of the Broadway production. As a result, her role as Glinda the Good Witch was scaled back. But she still won the Tony. And for the girl who had grown up in Flint, Mich., being in a big musical such as "The Wiz" was a dream come true.

"As a little girl I used to watch all these musical films from the '30s and '40s and used to dream about being in big musical productions and walking down staircases surrounded by gorgeous men and being lifted in the air, and that's what happened to me in 'The Wiz.'"

Playing the lead role in



Jazz vocalist Dee Dee Bridgewater, seen in this promotional handout, has won two Grammys since leaving Champaign-Urbana in 1970.

"Lady Day" in the late 1980s was a different story.

"She possessed me. I was possessed by Billie," Bridgewater said of Holiday, who was a heroin addict. "It was a very, very freaky experience. I got so into the role I felt I was possessed by this woman. I got very sick when I was doing the play in Paris.

"I didn't use heroin but the son of a producer who knew a lot of heroin addicts saw me and said, 'My, God, you're going through withdrawal.' I said, 'I don't know. I don't

Please see SINGER, B-2

Robin Scholz/The News-Gazette

"KICK BACK AND LISTEN"

A JAZZ HOMECOMING

FEATURING JAZZ ORGANIST
Jack McDuff
with
Guest Artists
Ron & Cecil Bridgewater



R. BRIDGEWATER:

Saxophonist with the Legendary Lena Horne



J. McDUFF:

Internationally Acclaimed Recording Artist



C. BRIDGEWATER:

Long-standing Trumpet Player with the
Great Max Roach

These (3) fine artists are from Champaign and have been successfully established in the competitive world of Jazz for many years.

A FREE EVENT

Friday, September 28, 1966
8:00 p.m., Foellinger Auditorium
U of I Champaign-Urbana

SPONSORED BY THE AFRO-AMERICAN CULTURAL PROGRAM
IN CO-OPERATION WITH STAR COURSE.

Pacifica Quartet



Krannert Center and the School of Music present the Pacifica Quartet, newly appointed quartet-in-residence at the School, in a series of three *concerts*. *The quartet begins its series with Mendelssohn's String Quartet in F Minor, Op. 80.*

Fr Sep 26, 7:30pm
FGH, \$10-18

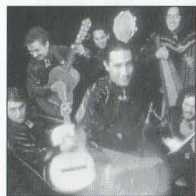
Kimono Fantasy: Attire from the Heian Court Era to the Present Day



Kimono dancers gracefully demonstrate the layering of opulent silk robes as they highlight the beauty, elaborate patterns, and colorful designs of the Japanese traditional costume. The Hakubi Kyoto Kimono School of Tokyo partners with the U of I's Japan House for a presentation of historical and contemporary kimonos.

Su Sep 28, 2pm
CPH, \$10-18

Interval: Sonos de México



Specializing in *son*, a rich and lively Mexican music tradition, this quintet creates the atmosphere of a fandango (a dance festival), where *son* is played, sung, and danced until sunrise.

Interval Series Patron Underwriter:
Anonymous

Tu Sep 30, Noon
LOB, free

Creative Intersections Sponsor: **The News-Gazette**

Theatre Key

FGH	Foellinger Great Hall	STH	Studio Theatre
TFT	Tryon Festival Theatre	AMPH	Amphitheatre
CPH	Colwell Playhouse		

217/333-6280 • 800/KCPATIX • KrannertCenter.com

Alexander String Quartet



The quartet which engaged our community with its exciting Beethoven cycle two years ago reprises two of the composer's Op. 59 "Razumovsky" Quartets. The Alexander also presents Shostakovich's String Quartet No. 8 and introduces its new first violinist, Zakarias Grafilo.

Patron Sponsors:
Jean and Howard Osborn

We Oct 1, 7:30pm
FGH, \$16-\$32

Patron Co-sponsors:
Dolores and Roger Yarbrough

Corporate Gold Sponsor: **The News-Gazette**

Creative Intersections

Traffic Jam

Mo Sep 29 / 5pm/ Lobby / free

Know Your University

Tu Sep 30 / noon / University YMCA (1001 S Wright St, Champaign) /free

Prelude

We Oct 1 / 6:30pm / Krannert Room / free

Creative Intersections

Krannert Center's Creative Intersections program—educational and interactive activities that bring audiences together, such as this season's Jazz Threads project—is made possible through a partnership with The News-Gazette.

The News-Gazette

KrannertCenter.com

kran-tix@uiuc.edu

217/333-6280 or 800/KCPATIX

217/333-9714 (TTY for patrons who are deaf, hard-of-hearing, or speech-impaired)

217/244-SHOW (Fax)

Ticket Office

Open 10am to 6pm daily; on days of performances open 10am through intermission.

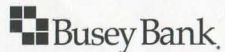


Krannert Center

being matters.

jazz threads

Krannert Center's Jazz Threads project—a year-long series of educational activities and jazz performances featuring Cecil Bridgewater—is made possible through the generosity of Corporate Underwriter Busey Bank.



Jazz Threads

Know Your University: Cecil Bridgewater

Tu Sep 23, Noon
University YMCA
(1001 S Wright St,
Champaign),
Free

Now a respected New York-based jazz trumpet player, arranger, producer, and educator, this Champaign native provides the heart and soul of Krannert Center's Jazz Threads project—a season-long community engagement project exploring jazz. Learn more about Jazz Threads, jazz in CU, and the life of jazz musician Cecil Bridgewater, guest of the University YMCA's popular noontime lecture series.

Jazz Threads

Jam Session

Tu Sep 23,
9pm-midnight
Two Main
(2 Main St,
Champaign)

Jazz musicians of all ages—students and professionals—are welcomed to Two Main Lounge to trade tunes and tricks with Chambana, Cecil Bridgewater, and special guests. Enthusiasts will also enjoy this as a listening experience.

Jazz Threads

Interview: WEFT, 90.1 FM

Fr Sep 26, 10:30am Cecil Bridgewater talks about jazz with WEFT host Jeremy Brandow.

Jazz Threads

Interview: WBCP, 1580 AM

Sa Sep 27 / 11am Cecil Bridgewater talks about growing up with jazz in CU on "Straight Talk Live" with host Lonnie Clark.

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Jazz Threads

Arts for Kids

Sa Sep 27, 1pm
Krannert Center
free
(tickets required)

Cecil Bridgewater's commitment to jazz education in Champaign-Urbana dates back to his student years when he taught at the Douglass Center in Champaign. Now a veteran of New York's Jazzmobile—an organization founded by Billy Taylor that is dedicated to jazz education—Cecil brings his experience and enthusiasm back to the youth of CU.

Jazz Threads

Cecil Bridgewater



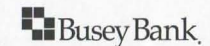
Sa Sep 27, 7:30pm
TFT, \$17-25

In his first mainstage Jazz Threads performance, featured artist Cecil Bridgewater has invited saxophonist Ron Bridgewater, pianist Mulgrew Miller, bassist Kenny Davis, and drummer Carl Allen to perform with him. After the performance, join in a Talkback with the artists, then find your way to the Lobby for the evening's Afterglow.

Patron Sponsors:
Margaret and Larry Neal

Patron Co-sponsor:
Anonymous

Jazz Threads Corporate Underwriter



Corporate Platinum Sponsor:



Corporate Silver Sponsor:



Jazz Threads

Afterglow: Jeff Helgesen Quintet featuring Rachael Lee

Sa Sep 27, 9:30pm
LOB, free

Two of CU's busiest jazz musicians kick off this season of Afterglow events featuring the swingin' jazz musicians of Champaign-Urbana.

Creative Intersections Sponsor:



217/333-6280 • 800/KCPATIX • KrannertCenter.com

There's a great story about jazz in Champaign-Urbana.

It holds chapters from the past. Sounds from the present. And ideas yet to be lived.

Step into the groove of life in C-U.

jazz threads

Featuring Cecil Bridgewater
September 22-27
December 1-6
March 1-7
April 29-May 2

A Great Day in C-U Photo

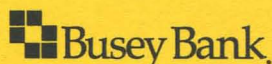
If you're a local jazz musician, get into this group photograph and join us for a party afterwards

Monday, September 22, 3:30pm
Krannert Center Amphitheatre
(lobby in case of rain)

Afterglow with Jeff Helgesen and Rachael Lee

Casual night music at Krannert Center's Interlude bar
Saturday, September 27, about 9:30pm
Krannert Center
Free

Jazz Threads
Underwriter



Creative Intersections
Sponsor



Corporate Platinum
Sponsor



Corporate Silver
Sponsors



Corporate Bronze
Sponsors
The Great Impasta
Shouting Ground
Technologies

Know Your University

Talk and music from Cecil Bridgewater
Tuesday, September 23, noon
University YMCA

1001 S. Wright St., Champaign
Free

Jazz Vespers

The House of Cool meets the House of Prayer
Sunday, October 12, 5:30pm

University Place Christian Church
403 S. Wright St., Champaign
Free

Jazz Jam Session

Join the jam with Cecil and Chambana
Tuesday, September 23, 9pm to midnight

Cowboy Monkey
6 Taylor St., Champaign
Free

Other Cecil Bridgewater Concerts at Krannert Center

Saturday, December 6, 7:30pm
With Dee Dee Bridgewater, vocals
U of I Concert Jazz Band

Saturday, March 6, 10am
Java and Jazz, a casual morning concert
Coffee and bagels on sale at 9am
Sunday, March 7, 7:30pm
With Clark Terry, trumpet

Arts for Kids

Jazz talk and sounds for grades 1 to 4
Saturday, September 27, 1pm

Krannert Center
Free; tickets required

Cecil Bridgewater and guests in Concert at Krannert Center

Carl Allen, drums
Ron Bridgewater, saxophone
Kenny Davis, bass
Mulgrew Miller, piano
Saturday, September 27, 7:30pm
Krannert Center
\$17 to \$23

Patron Sponsors
Margaret and Larry Neal

Patron Co-sponsors
Frances and Marc Ansel
Sam Gove
Anonymous

Talkback after the show, free



For information on all events
217/333-6280
800/KCPATIX
KrannertCenter.com

creative intersections



September Jam Session

With Chambana and special guest Cecil Bridgewater

Tuesday, September 23, 2003

9pm-midnight

Two Main Lounge

2 E Main St, Champaign

Jazz musicians of all ages—students and professionals—are welcomed to Champaign's Two Main Lounge to trade tunes and licks as Krannert Center's Jazz Threads project begins its first jam session.

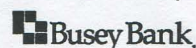
Listeners, enthusiasts, and supporters of jazz: come support the many talented jazz musicians of CU—professionals, high school and U of I students—and welcome Jazz Threads special guest Cecil Bridgewater during an evening that's sure to please.

Jam sessions are a time-honored tradition in jazz. The masters all gained an understanding of the language of jazz as young and old jammed together, swapped techniques and tunes, and encouraged each other. This lively jam session reunites trumpeter Cecil Bridgewater with current Chambana musicians, Nathaniel Banks, trumpet, Ron Bridgewater, saxophone, Barrington Coleman, piano, Toby Curtright, bass and Maurice McKinley, drums.

Krannert Center's Jazz Threads is a season-long community engagement project exploring jazz. We welcome local legend and trumpeter Cecil Bridgewater and his special guests for four mainstage Krannert Center performances and three weeks of educational and community participatory activities tapping into the rich jazz history of Central Illinois.

For more information, visit KrannertCenter.com or call 217/333-6280

Jazz Threads Corporate Underwriter:



Creative Intersections Corporate Platinum Sponsor:



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800/KCPATIX
kran-tix@uiuc.edu
KrannertCenter.com

College of Fine and Applied Arts
University of Illinois
at Urbana-Champaign
500 S. Goodwin Avenue
Urbana, Illinois 61801-3788



Krannert Center for the Performing Arts
College of Fine and Applied Arts
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign



Marquee Series
Jazz Threads
with
Cecil Bridgewater

Tryon Festival Theatre
Saturday, September 27, 2003, at 7:30pm

A large, stylized handwritten signature in dark ink, which appears to read 'Cecil Bridgewater'. The signature is written over the printed text of the event details.

This Marquee performance is supported in part by the National Endowment for the Arts and by the Illinois Arts Council, which recognizes Krannert Center in its Partners in Excellence Program.

Krannert Center Marquee performances are made possible by generous donations to the Marquee Endowment and the Marquee Fund. These gifts allow Krannert Center to present outstanding professional artists in central Illinois.

Chicago Tribune Magazine

AUGUST 18, 1996 • SECTION 10

SINGING FOR SURVIVAL

*After wandering the world,
jazz vocalist Dee Dee Bridgewater
makes a triumphant return
to her roots*



NOBODY KNOWS THE

The hard times and bittersweet success of

By Howard Reich

No sooner does the great, expatriate singer slip into a booth in a crowded Chicago restaurant than a young waiter hustles over, armed with pen, paper and a broad, enthusiastic smile.

"Could I have your autograph, please?" he says in a rush, catching her a bit off guard, though clearly flattered.

Yet when Dee Dee Bridgewater—who has been living in artistic exile near Paris for more than a decade—happily signs her name with a flourish, the young man with the buzz cut looks positively crestfallen.

"Aren't you Me'Shell?" he says, referring to a 27-year-old pop star whose

Howard Reich is the Tribune's jazz critic.

latest video has been saturating the airwaves via MTV.

"I'm afraid not, but you can keep the autograph anyway," says Bridgewater, a bit crestfallen herself.

Once again she is reminded, as if she needed reminding, that no matter how big a name she has become in Europe, no matter how many French TV appearances she has made, no matter how many American Grammy nominations she has won (three) while toiling several thousand miles away, she remains nearly invisible when she comes home.

Worse, she is mistaken for a flavor-of-the-month pop star created by the same record industry that helped drive Bridgewater from the United States roughly 13 years ago.



TROUBLE SHE'S SEEN

expatriate jazz singer Dee Dee Bridgewater

Tribune photographs by Chris Walker

Perhaps Bridgewater endures this latest slight without protest because she knows that finally, after more years of pain and frustration than she cares to remember, after encounters with artistic paralysis and near self-destruction, she is on the verge of conquering America once and for all.

On Sunday, Bridgewater will appear on national TV, headlining a 25th anniversary tribute to the Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C. (The 7 p.m. concert, taped earlier this summer, will air on PBS.)

And less than two weeks later, on Aug. 30, she will star on opening night of the 18th an-

nual Chicago Jazz Festival, singing before tens of thousands of listeners in a Grant Park concert to be broadcast coast to coast on National Public Radio (in Chicago, the performance will be aired during live coverage of the fest on WBEZ, 91.5 FM).

It is the biggest date she will have played in the States since gingerly launching her American comeback a little more than a year ago, and it will bring her full circle, back home to Illinois, where she began her professional career in Champaign-Urbana.

Bridgewater may have fled the U.S. for many good reasons—sexual harassment from individuals within the entertainment industry; beatings from a jealous husband; emotional pain from her crumbling self-esteem as



a woman, a black and an artist—but she is healed, she says, and she is back. With a vengeance.

Early on, before the disappointments, the betrayals and the abuse, Bridgewater's future seemed rich with promise. Born Denise Eileen Garrett 46 years ago in Memphis and raised in Flint, Mich., she was crooning tunes before she could talk and reveling in her gift not long after.

"I used to lock myself up in the bathroom to sing," recalls Bridgewater. "I picked the bathroom because there was a huge, full-length mirror on one side of the room, a countertop mirror across from it, and if you looked into one mirror you could see infinite reflections of yourself singing.

"And I'd be wailing in there, and my mother would be yelling, 'Can't you just shut up?'"

No doubt about it, "she was always the entertainer," remembers her only sibling, Rhonda Whitters, now of Rochester, N.Y.

"She was like [a born] performer—she hungered for the stage," says the singer's father, Matthew Garrett, a former musician who had played trumpet for Dinah Washington and taught music at a high school in Memphis.

By the time the ebullient girl everyone called Dee Dee was a teenager, she had formed a Supremes-like vocal group she dubbed The Iridescent and had one local talent contests as a soloist.

Her tumultuous journey didn't fully take flight, however, until 1969, when she played a collegiate jazz festival at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign to pick up some spare cash.

"At that time, she sounded almost like Sarah," recalls Chicago saxophonist Andy Goodrich, referring to the divine Miss Vaughan. "I played that U. of I. date with her, and she floored everyone with that singing of hers."

Indeed, no less than John Garvey—the famed, revered and autocratic czar



Where to see and hear Dee Dee Bridgewater

Aug. 18, 7 p.m. on WTTW-Ch. 11, "The Kennedy Center 25th Anniversary Celebration."

Bridgewater shares the program with Aretha Franklin, Trisha Yearwood, Harolyn Blackwell and other stars.

Aug. 30, 7:55 p.m., Petrillo Music Shell in Grant Park, Chicago Jazz Festival.

Bridgewater and her band headline opening night of the fest; phone 312-744-3315.

Oct. 20, 7 p.m. Arts Center at College of DuPage, Glen Ellyn.

Bridgewater performs with the Jacky Terrasson Trio; phone 708-942-2800.

Tribune photo by Chris Walker at Buckingham Fountain

Wilson, who was one of her idols," remembers Cecil Bridgewater.

Perhaps it was inevitable, though, that a young singer who was earning comparisons to Vaughan and Wilson would hit an artistic dead end playing "the wife, just tagging along" with her husband on tour (even if she had begun making a name for herself with the Thad Jones-Mel Lewis Orchestra).

The Bridgewaters separated not long after their daughter, Tulani, was born in 1972, and Dee Dee's career took off like a rocket.

By 1974, she had landed a supporting role in a daring new stage musical, "The Wiz"—an exuberant, black version of the film musical "The Wizard

ble began.

"One of the producers from 20th Century Fox kept hounding me to sleep with him," says Bridgewater.

"And I kept saying, 'I'm not going to sleep with you. I don't do that.'"

"So he says, 'Then I'm going to fire the director [Moses], because I know you're sleeping with *him*.'"

Bridgewater wouldn't relent, and Moses, with whom she indeed was involved, was fired; Bridgewater's role thereafter was cut by more than half before the show arrived on Broadway.

Even so, she took a Tony nomination for best supporting actress in a musical, a turn of events that, alas, brought only more misery.

Moses, says Bridgewater, was jealous of her triumph in a musical that had been taken away from him, and he became emotionally, verbally and, finally, physically abusive. The pressures she faced at home (she was living with Moses by then) and in the theater quickly proved too much to bear.

"I don't want to blame Gilbert [Moses] for everything, because he's dead now and can't defend himself," says Bridgewater of the esteemed actor-director, who died last year, at age 52. Nevertheless, most of Bridgewater's memories of her years with Moses are bleak.

"He had undermined my self-confidence to the point that I just didn't think that I had any talent; I didn't think I was worth much as a person, as a human being.

"So I tried to commit suicide [via pills] and the only thing that saved it from getting into the papers was that when I went into the hospital it was with my maiden name.

"They had to pump my stomach, which was horrible.

"And I'll never forget this nurse who was pumping this [stuff] out of me just screaming: 'You're not going to die. Wake up. Wake up.'"

"And I was crying, 'I want to die, I want to die.'"

Somehow, even against her deepest wishes, she lived. Perhaps she was tougher than she realized, or perhaps the unnamed and long-forgotten nurse just wouldn't allow her to slip away.

To this day, Bridgewater doesn't know or understand precisely why she survived, but when she got back on her feet, she was reborn, ready to fight anew.

She quit "The Wiz," packed her bags, took her daughter and fled to Los Angeles, hoping to leave New York and its ghastly memories behind.

Moses, however, pursued her. And like many battered women, Bridgewater found it difficult to escape his grip and, in fact, agreed to let him move in with her and their daughter. A few

dubbed The Iridescent and had one local talent contests as a soloist.

Her tumultuous journey didn't fully take flight, however, until 1969, when she played a collegiate jazz festival at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign to pick up some spare cash.

"At that time, she sounded almost like Sarah," recalls Chicago saxophonist Andy Goodrich, referring to the divine Miss Vaughan. "I played that U. of I. date with her, and she floored everyone with that singing of hers."

Indeed, no less than John Garvey—the feared, revered and autocratic czar of the U. of I. jazz band—on the spot invited the teenage Garrett to leave Michigan State University in East Lansing to enroll at the U. of I. and join the ensemble's upcoming tour of Russia.

"I've had only two or three singers sing with my band over the years, and she was one of them," says Garvey, who does not praise easily or often. "She was already a very good singer. She sang with us on that tour, and she sang very well."

She also met U. of I. grad student and trumpeter Cecil Bridgewater on that tour; the two of them had married and lived in New York by the time she was 20.

"Dee Dee already was a terrific singer—she sounded a lot like Nancy

that a young singer who was earning comparisons to Vaughan and Wilson would hit an artistic dead end playing "the wife, just tagging along" with her husband on tour (even if she had begun making a name for herself with the Thad Jones-Mel Lewis Orchestra).

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By 1974, she had landed a supporting role in a daring new stage musical, "The Wiz"—an exuberant, black version of the film musical "The Wizard of Oz"—though she had minimal acting experience.

"It was exciting, because 20th Century Fox was the [stage show's] producer, so there was big money in it," remembers Bridgewater, who originated the role of Glinda, the Good Witch.

"There were gorgeous costumes and a highly respected director [Gilbert Moses], so it felt like it was going to be something big—and it was."

Indeed, after the show premiered off-Broadway, the critics singled out Bridgewater, with Clive Barnes in the New York Times calling her voice "big and beautiful," Walter Kerr in the same paper dubbing her "persuasively sinuous."

And then, as she recalls it, the trou-

Century Fox kept hounding me to sleep with him," says Bridgewater.

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"When I got the Tony nomination, and Stephanie Mills [the 15-year-old star of the show] *didn't* get nominated for best actress, the black community just beat me up," says Bridgewater.

"There were articles in the [black press] saying that I had slept around to get my nomination.

"And then when I won the Tony, it was like, 'Oh, my God, oh, my God.'

"People [in the cast] were not speaking to me. All these other actresses who had been in musicals before, they had studied and were trained, and here I am, this jazz singer, and I'm getting the Tony?"

As Bridgewater was discovering, success can be a double-edged sword, but that wasn't even the worst of it.

just wouldn't allow her to slip away.

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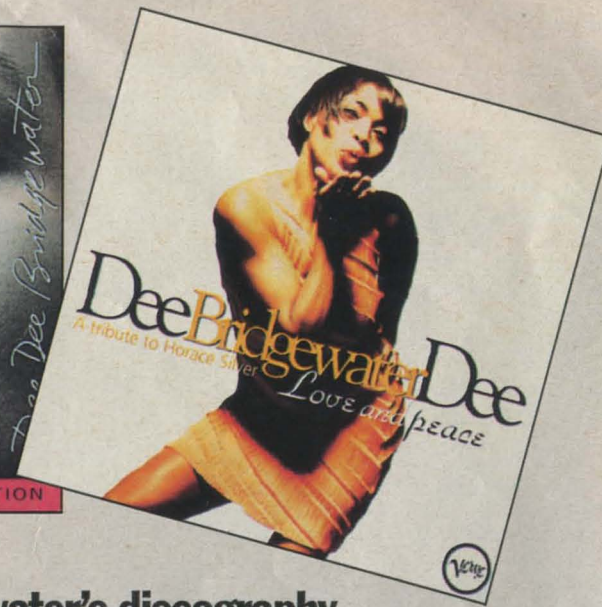
Moses, however, pursued her. And like many battered women, Bridgewater found it difficult to escape his grip and, in fact, agreed to let him move in with her and Tulani in L.A. They were married in '76.

"When we got back together, I started keeping a huge butcher knife under my pillow," she remembers, "and every night I went to sleep with this big thing under my head.

"Gilbert was a macho guy; he would never make a bed, so he'd never know. He had no clue that I had a blade with me that was this thick.

"But I told him, 'If you ever raise a hand to me again, I'll kill you. And if you ever touch Tulani, I will definitely kill you,' and I meant it."

At first, life with Moses among the L.A. show-business elite proved seductive, with "a lot of serious visitors, like Sidney Poitier and Harry Belafonte and all of these famous black celebrities



Highlights from Dee Dee Bridgewater's discography

Just Family (Elektra Records). No recording sums up the impetuous spirit and vocal virtuosity of Dee Dee Bridgewater's work of the '70s more convincingly than "Just Family," with its famous cover shot of a pregnant Bridgewater *au naturel*. Though the jazz-fusion instrumentals sound dated, Bridgewater's high-flying vocals are timeless. This 1978 LP may be difficult to find, with used-record stores the best place to look.

Live in Paris (MCA Impulse). Recorded in France in 1987 and issued in the U.S. in 1990, the recording earned Bridgewater her first Grammy nomination and marked the beginning of her return to bona fide jazz singing. Whether caressing ballads or blues, whether producing stunning scat solos or fervent lyric lines, Bridgewater announces

herself as one of the reigning divas of the post-Sarah-Vaughan, post-Ella-Fitzgerald age.

In Montreux (Verve). Recorded live during the Montreux Jazz Festival in 1990, this CD documents the singer's growing self-assurance as jazz improviser and song interpreter. It would be difficult to name another female jazz artist who could match the rhythmic energy and vocal invention Bridgewater brings to "All of Me" or the hushed tone and sustained, dirge-like tempo with which she remakes "Strange Fruit." The recording's "Horace Silver Medley" lays the groundwork for her "Love and Peace" CD of 1995.

Keeping Tradition (Verve). Bridgewater served as producer of this recording and it showed: Here is the best jazz CD she had recorded yet, address-

ing the legacy of Fitzgerald and Vaughan in a variety of standards, but refreshing tradition with her own haunting vocal colors. Little wonder the recording earned Bridgewater her second Grammy nomination.

Love and Peace (Verve). Bridgewater had been singing the music of Horace Silver since she was a teenager, and she had included the funk-master's repertoire on her previous two recordings. Finally, she devoted an entire CD to such pure Silver classics as "Nica's Dream," "The Tokyo Blues," "Saint Vitus Dance," "The Jody Grind" and several more. The Grammy-nominated CD established Bridgewater as the foremost female interpreter of Silver's songs, bar none.

—Howard Reich

coming to see me," when Bridgewater played in the L.A. cast of "The Wiz."

"I was just totally awestruck by the film industry and the fact that you could go out to restaurants and see these celebrities. I'm from a small city in the Midwest, and this was exciting."

The battles between Moses and his gifted wife, however, were far from over. Even before the birth of their daughter, China Moses, in 1978, Bridgewater had been looking for movie and TV work in Hollywood, and she thought she at last had hit the big time when she seemed

body else said that it would be OK, that it wouldn't be a problem, they decided not to give me the role.

"And then Gilbert turned up getting a job as the director—so we were doomed from the beginning.

"Everything I got, he undid.

"Later on, I had signed a contract to be a regular on 'Hill Street Blues,'" adds Bridgewater, "and Gilbert said, 'If you take this role, I'll leave.'

"So there I was. My agent said: 'Dee Dee, you've already signed the contract. They've got your costumes, you've got

was happening in Dee Dee's life.

"Moses, probably because he was a director, wanted to be in on all of the things that Dee Dee was involved with, and he wanted to be a step ahead of her, too. It became a very competitive thing for him, unfortunately.

"The beatings were so awful that at one point she was living in a hotel under some kind of guard."

Her recording career wasn't faring well either, because Atlantic Records lost interest in her, she says, when she refused to lie down for one of its execu-

water did for Elektra from 1978-80 did not exactly set the world ablaze, and by the start of the new decade Bridgewater seemed to have come to the end. Finished in Hollywood, tossed aside by the pop record industry, no longer working anywhere as a jazz singer, she was a has-been in a town ever searching for the next big thing, the sexy young starlet.

With her divorce from Moses painfully wending its way through the courts, she wanted nothing more than to get out of town.

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The battles between Moses and his gifted wife, however, were far from over. Even before the birth of their daughter, China Moses, in 1978, Bridgewater had been looking for movie and TV work in Hollywood, and she thought she at last had hit the big time when she seemed to have won the role of Mathilda in the 1977 TV mini-series "Roots."

Before shooting, however, Bridgewater had to have her tonsils out, and Moses, not surprisingly to his wife, leaped into action.

"He went to the producer and the three directors that I was going to be working with [on 'Roots'] and told them all that I had just had my tonsils out, and that if I worked, I would ruin my voice," says Bridgewater, with a sigh.

"And he did such a convincing job that even when my surgeon, my throat doctor, my speech therapist and every-

body else said that it would be OK, that it wouldn't be a problem, they decided not to give me the role.

"And then Gilbert turned up getting a job as the director—so we were doomed from the beginning.

"Everything I got, he undid.

"Later on, I had signed a contract to be a regular on 'Hill Street Blues,'" adds Bridgewater, "and Gilbert said, 'If you take this role, I'll leave.'

"So there I was. My agent said: 'Dee Dee, you've already signed the contract. They've got your costumes, you've got rehearsals in two days, you start shooting in a week. You're going to be black-listed; you won't be able to work in Hollywood at all. He's not going to leave you. He's just jealous. I've seen it before. Don't do it.'"

But Bridgewater did, she says, and thereafter she watched both her marriage and her acting career go down in flames.

"Dee Dee suffered terrible things from Moses at that time," says Cecil Bridgewater, her first husband. "Because we have a daughter together, Tulani, I still was pretty aware of what

was happening in Dee Dee's life.

"Moses, probably because he was a director, wanted to be in on all of the things that Dee Dee was involved with, and he wanted to be a step ahead of her, too. It became a very competitive thing for him, unfortunately.

"The beatings were so awful that at one point she was living in a hotel under some kind of guard."

Her recording career wasn't faring well either, because Atlantic Records lost interest in her, she says, when she refused to lie down for one of its executives.

"My album ['Dee Dee Bridgewater'] was just coming out on Atlantic in '76 when I got a call, and this man said: 'We just found out that you said no to so-and-so, and we think you should reconsider, if you want your album to work.'

"And I said, 'Well, I'm sorry, but no, I won't.'

"And the man says, 'If you don't, then we'll have to shelve your album. That's really too bad for you.'

"And he hung up, and they pulled my album, which was getting great reviews."

The three pop-fusion albums Bridge-

water did for Elektra from 1978-80 did not exactly set the world ablaze, and by the start of the new decade Bridgewater seemed to have come to the end. Finished in Hollywood, tossed aside by the pop record industry, no longer working anywhere as a jazz singer, she was a has-been in a town ever searching for the next big thing, the sexy young starlet.

With her divorce from Moses painfully wending its way through the courts, she wanted nothing more than to get out of town.

"I was completely disillusioned, completely lost as a person," she says.

"L.A. was just 'lost souls land.' [In L.A.] you get so caught up in trying to be somebody that you just lose sight of what it is you want to do."

So in 1983, Bridgewater bought a one-way ticket out of town, accepting an offer to join the international touring production of the musical revue "Sophisticated Ladies," which took her to France later that year.

She didn't speak a word of French;

Continued on page 26

Bridgewater

Continued from page 17

she knew almost nothing of the culture or the country; her audiences were utterly unaware of who she was, what she did and, most assuredly, what she had been through.

Yet suddenly and inexplicably, at one of the lowest points in her career, Dee Dee Bridgewater found herself a star. The French press wrote reams about her. French TV came calling. French audiences flocked to the show.

"By the end of the four-month run, I had become this starlet," she remembers, still a bit incredulous. "I was always out at all the discos and all the best private parties, constantly getting in the papers and doing TV shows.

"So I stayed on after the show closed and lived this glamorous nightlife. I started doing jazz concerts in theaters! It was incredible."

Indeed, nothing like it had happened to Bridgewater before. Though she owned a Tony, though she had appeared numerous times on Johnny Carson's "Tonight Show" in the '70s, she never really had triumphed in the role she had envisioned since childhood, when she still was crooning in front of bathroom mirrors: jazz singer.

Now Paris was hanging on her every note.

After a brief stint back in Flint, to help her ailing mother recover from a bout with lung cancer, Bridgewater returned to Paris in 1986 to star in "Lady Day," based on the life of another tormented American jazz singer, Billie Holiday. Because Bridgewater didn't speak French, she learned—and performed—the script phonetically.

Again, France went wild, prompting "Lady Day" to extend its run for months.

By now divorced from Moses and living with her two children in Paris, Bridgewater began to realize that she had found something that had eluded her back home in the States. Call it acceptance, popularity, respect, honor, whatever, it felt more warm and embracing than anything she had experienced in Manhattan or Hollywood or any point between.

"I found out that I had started to feel

'Musicians are treated so well in France; to have to come back and be reduced to staying in funky motels where you're scared to walk barefoot is just sad.'

romance between the American jazz singer and the Parisian public matured like a great love affair. Before long, she was hosting her own TV show ("52nd Street," a jazz interview program), performing on national variety programs, appearing in made-for-TV movies with French star Charles Aznavour, performing as a black Sally Bowles in an African-American version of "Cabaret," signing autographs as she strolled down the Champs-Élysées.

In France, she soon became known simply as "eclectic Dee Dee" or, better still, "Josephine Baker of the '90s," to quote two French reviews that point to her stature in her adopted home.

In a way, of course, Bridgewater simply was retracing the steps that so many gifted but neglected American jazz musicians had made before her. From New Orleans saxophone virtuoso Sidney Bechet in the 1920s to Chicago tenor giant Johnny Griffin in the '60s, black American jazz artists have found in France the honor and respect they deserved, but rarely received, at home.

But for Bridgewater, the seduction of France extended well beyond music.

"We all felt free there," says Bridgewater, referring to her daughters, who implored her to let the family take root in France.

"My 8-year-old was taking the subway to school by herself; we could go out at night and not feel afraid.

"And the daily living was so much better; this whole idea of walking everywhere and buying your food on a daily basis and keeping just a little refrigerator, rather than freezing everything in advance, as we do in America. We ate better, because everything was fresh. We lived better."

Not long after Bridgewater had arrived in France to do "Lady Day," she met Jean Marie Durand, a jazz-club manager who would become her

Bridgewater's singing, the depth of her interpretations, the funk-tinged flavor of her rhythms announced the arrival of a major figure.

It would be only be a matter of time before the jazz world caught up with her.

"I kept reading in the French jazz magazines about this supposedly glorious American singer who could make it only in France, and I must admit I was suspicious," recalls Andre Menard, co-director (with Alain Simard) of the world's biggest jazz festival, the Festival International de Jazz de Montreal.

"I read about how eccentric she was, and I thought it was a bit of a put-on.

"But then my partner, Alain, and I were both stranded in Cannes one evening, and so I said, 'Well, why don't we go see Dee Dee Bridgewater—there are a few good guests on her show.'

"And when we saw her, I was totally floored. Her delivery, obviously, is pretty brash, and this pleases [non-Anglo] peoples. But at the same time, she could sing.

"You know how we always say, 'Too bad, the great singers are all gone. There's no more Ella, no Sarah?'

"When I heard her, I thought, 'Well, she fits in there somewhere among the greats.'"

Putting their money where their tastes were, Menard and Simard booked Bridgewater as an opening act for American singer-guitarist John Pizzarelli in 1993; Montreal reacted much as Paris had done a few years earlier.

Critic Alain Brunet of La Presse called her "the jazz singer." Manon Guilbert of *Journal de Montreal* wrote that "Madame Bridgewater has a sublime voice" that "disguises itself as an instrument."

"I went to that performance, and it just blew me away," remembers Rhonda Whitters, Bridgewater's sister, who

own Montreal show at the festival's mid-sized Theatre Maisonneuve to similar raves, with critic Claude Cote writing in *Voir* that she was "passionate to the tips of her long fingers." Critic Patrick Gauthier noted in *Journal de Montreal* that "this singer is a veritable dynamo... a very great singer."

And last year, when Bridgewater headlined at the festival's biggest auditorium, in Montreal's Place des Arts, she earned screaming, standing ovations for her tribute to the music of Horace Silver.

The composer, who was to have accompanied Bridgewater, didn't show up, but Bridgewater sang tunes such as "Filthy McNasty," "Opus de Funk" and "Sister Sadie" with an exuberance and naturalness that established her as the definitive vocal interpreter of Silver's music today.

The sellout concert was aired nationally on the Canadian Broadcast Corporation a few days later, and shortly after that Bridgewater's all-Silver "Love and Peace" CD was nominated for a Grammy in the States (she lost out this year to Lena Horne).

Having conquered Montreal, Bridgewater obviously would be heading south of the border next, but as soon as she began appearing here, she says, "I was scared. I found out from doing just the first few gigs that I'm psychologically still very fragile about performing in America.

"Just the places you play, the way you're treated is so different here.

"I just played a club in Ft. Lauderdale that should not even be allowed as a building. It's a dump.

"And it gets depressing after a while. You say to yourself, 'If this is what jazz is in the United States, do I need this?'

"Musicians are treated so well in France; to have to come back and be reduced to staying in funky motels where you're scared to walk barefoot is just sad. I don't get it."

But with Bridgewater's star ascending in the States, perhaps it won't be long before American promoters begin booking four-star hotel accommodations for her. Her growing roster of dates and her scheduled appear-

bout with lung cancer, Bridgewater returned to Paris in 1986 to star in "Lady Day," based on the life of another tormented American jazz singer, Billie Holiday. Because Bridgewater didn't speak French, she learned—and performed—the script phonetically.

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"I found out that I had started to feel completely stunted artistically in the States," says Bridgewater today.

"In the entertainment business, I had spent all my time listening to people telling me what I needed to do if I wanted to have that hit, if I wanted to have that success. I forgot who I was.

"In fact, I don't think I even would have come back to jazz singing if I hadn't gone to France. There, people actually *wanted* me to do jazz concerts.

"I couldn't believe it."

Practically since the moment Bridgewater had set foot on French soil, in 1983, she had led a charmed life, and the

Beyond music.

"We all felt free there," says Bridgewater, referring to her daughters, who implored her to let the family take root in France.

"My 8-year-old was taking the subway to school by herself; we could go out at night and not feel afraid.

"And the daily living was so much better, this whole idea of walking everywhere and buying your food on a daily basis and keeping just a little refrigerator, rather than freezing everything in advance, as we do in America. We ate better, because everything was fresh. We lived better."

Not long after Bridgewater had arrived in France to do "Lady Day," she met Jean Marie Durand, a jazz-club manager who would become her husband in 1991 and father of their son, Gabriel Morgan Durand-Garrett, in 1992.

A year later, Bridgewater released the most stunning recording of her career, "Keeping Tradition" (Verve), which all at once reminded the jazz world outside of France that one of its most promising talents had blossomed into a master. The brilliant scat vocalizing she produced on this recording was of a stature no female singer under 50 had achieved since the heyday of Ella Fitzgerald and Sarah Vaughan.

More important, the maturity of

bad, the great singers are all gone. There's no more Ella, no Sarah?"

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"I went to that performance, and it just blew me away," remembers Rhonda Whitters, Bridgewater's sister, who hadn't seen her perform since "The Wiz," in the mid-'70s.

"I think what happened to Dee Dee is that France just allowed her to go through a natural growth process that probably had stopped when she was still in the United States.

"To be a great performer, I think you really have to come to terms with yourself, to be relaxed enough to be your best. And that's what happened to Dee Dee in France. She figured out exactly who she was, apart from husbands and record companies and all the rest."

In '94, Bridgewater headlined her

ing in France.
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But with Bridgewater's star ascending in the States, perhaps it won't be long before American promoters begin booking four-star hotel accommodations for her. Her growing roster of dates and her scheduled appearance next year as a presenter during the Grammy Awards suggests that her moment finally may have come.

Nevertheless, Bridgewater probably will always come back to America as a tourist, nothing more.

"Dee Dee often has told me that ever since she got to Paris, she has been treated as an individual, and it didn't matter if she was black or blue or brown or man or woman," says Matthew Garrett, her father.

"She is quite the celebrity over there in Europe. I'm sure that she'll never come home." ■



News from
Krannert Center
for the
Performing Arts

Let the 30th Anniversary Season Begin



Dee Dee Bridgewater



n anni-
versary
demands
celebr-
ation,
and at
Krannert
Center
we
celebrate

through the performers and performances on our stages. We celebrate with dance, music, opera, and theatre.

Krannert Center boasts several opening nights this 30th anniversary season. Officially, the 1998-1999 season begins with a School of Music faculty recital by oboist **Nancy Ambrose King** on Friday, September 11. The Department of Dance opening night comes one week later on Thursday, September 17, when Beverly Blossom returns for **Studiospace I**. The Department of Theatre introduces new stagecraft technology with its opening production, *Come Back to the 5 & Dime*, **Jimmy Dean**, **Jimmy Dean** on Thursday, October 1. The School of Music Opera Program season begins on Friday, November 6 with a production of the same opera presented during Krannert Center's inaugural season: Donizetti's *The Elixir of Love*.

When we asked ourselves how best to begin Krannert Center's 30th season Marquee events, we couldn't think of a more meaningful way than to welcome someone whose career began at

Where the human spirit comes alive

the University of Illinois. Now recognized as a sparkling ambassador for jazz, **Dee Dee Bridgewater** has gone far since her days singing with the UI Jazz Band. She enjoys success as a jazz singer and as an actress who has appeared on Broadway stages. Proclaimed "Best Jazz Vocalist" at the 1997 Grammy Award ceremony, Dee Dee Bridgewater sings and scats her way through *A Tribute to Ella Fitzgerald*, on Wednesday, September 23, showing us why she has become one of the great divas of jazz.

"Expect a fireworks and fever evening" say critics of Dee Dee Bridgewater performances, so we intend to take things to a feverish pitch right from the start. **School of Music ensembles** will serenade you as you park your car the evening of September 23. Then Krannert Center's amphitheatre will ring with the sound of music at 6:30 pm when **Kristina Boerger** leads her exuberant vocal ensemble, *Amasong*, in tribute to the performing arts. The **UI Black Chorus** stirs passions further when **Ollie Watts Davis** leads them in song at 7 pm. Then turn your gaze to the west at 7:30 to see some real **fireworks** in honor of Krannert Center's 30th anniversary.

Whether or not you have tickets to Dee Dee Bridgewater's performance, come enjoy *Amasong*, the UI Black Chorus, School of Music ensembles, and fireworks as this season of celebration gets under way.

Family

The Chenille Sisters Kids Show

Kids and parents can listen, laugh together, and sing along on award-winning Chenille Sisters originals in a special hour-long show just for kids and families. Recommended for kids 3-8 years of age.

Sun, Oct 4 at 3 pm
Tryon Festival Theatre
Flx: \$14 / SC \$13 / UI \$8 / Yth \$8
Sgl: \$15 / SC \$14 / UI \$9 / Yth \$9

Corporate Silver Sponsor:
**NewsTalk 1400-WDWS /
Lite Rock 97.5-WHMS**
Corporate Bronze Sponsor:
Colwell Systems
Patron Sponsors:
Alice and Gene Lamb

A Taste of the Arts

The Krannert Center Student Association invites the community to learn about the fine arts and the variety of professions in the field. Visitors can "taste" the arts via demonstrations and exhibits in the Lobby, performances in the theatres, and tours to the backstage and workshop areas of Krannert Center. Families are welcome.

Sun, Oct 18 from 1-5 pm
Lobby
Free Admission



The Chenille Sisters

Department of Theatre: *Once Upon A Mattress*

**Music by Mary Rodgers
Lyrics by Marshall Barer
Susannah Berryman, director**

The adventures of a mute King, an overwhelming Queen, a Prince desperate for a wife, and a future bride direct from the swamp, create a wonderful re-telling of the charming story *The Princess and The Pea*. This Broadway musical sensation packs more fun per minute than any other recent hit. Bring the whole family.

Thu-Sat, Oct 22-24 at 8 pm
Thu-Sat, Oct 29-31 at 8 pm
Sun, Nov 1 at 3 pm
Colwell Playhouse
Flx: \$10 / SC \$9 / UI \$5 / Yth \$5
Sgl: \$11 / SC \$10 / UI \$5 / Yth \$6

Jazz and Blues

Dee Dee Bridgewater

A Tribute to Ella Fitzgerald

With the appearance of her Grammy-winning recording *Dear Ella*, University of Illinois graduate Dee Dee Bridgewater has proven herself the sole and rightful heir to the Ella Fitzgerald tradition. She kicks off Krannert Center's 30th anniversary Marquee season with a fireworks and fever evening.

Wed, Sep 23 at 8 pm
Tryon Festival Theatre
Flx: \$18 / SC \$17 / UI \$10 / Yth \$10
Sgl: \$20 / SC \$19 / UI \$12 / Yth \$12

Corporate Silver Sponsor:
**The Busey Family of
Financial Services**

Patron Co-Sponsors:
**Bonnie and Rolland Kelley
Jewel and Aaron Kurland
Mary and George Perlstein**

In celebration of Krannert Center's 30th season, enter the building to strains of School of Music ensembles and enjoy the UIUC Black Chorus and Amasong, Champaign-Urbana's Premiere Lesbian/Feminist Chorus, performing in the amphitheatre. The music begins at 6:30 pm with a brief fireworks display at 7:30 pm.

Champaign's Prodigal Diva

By Shelley Masar

When Dee Dee Bridgewater and her trio play a tribute to Ella Fitzgerald at the Krannert Center on September 23, some in the audience might have mixed feelings about the glamorous Paris-based singer's performance — those feelings stirred up when a very successful member of the family drops back home.

Dee Dee Bridgewater's connection to jazz in Champaign began in 1968 when John Garvey, UI music professor and director of the UI #1 Jazz Band, heard seventeen-year-old Dee Dee Garrett sing at the Collegiate Jazz Festival hosted by the brand new Krannert Center. Garvey thought the young singer was talented and sexy, just what his brilliant all-male jazz band needed. He invited her to go along on the band's State Department-sponsored tour to Russia the following year.

Garvey is first to admit that the young woman deserved his recognition. Her talent was no accident. Her father, Matthew Garrett, a trumpet player, was teaching music at Manassas High School in Memphis, Tennessee, during a period when jazz talent collected there synchronistically. George Coleman, the tenor saxophonist who played with Miles Davis in the early '60s, was also at Manassas, as were alto saxophonist Frank Strozier and pianist Hal Mabern. Dee Dee had learned a lot from her father and her father's friends, people like alto player Andy Goodrich, for whom she was singing when Garvey heard her at Krannert.

In 1969 it was John Garvey who was collecting jazz talent. A violist by training, a member of the famed Walden String Quartet, he had a tremendous appetite for music, old and new. "Garvey was

non-professional group. "Part of the uniqueness," explains Tessin, was that "the players wrote for the band." Cecil Bridgewater, and trombonists Morgan Powell and Larry Dwyer wrote charts, and so did "far out" UI school of music composers such as Ben Johnston. "Other college bands were playing very contemporary jazz, but Garvey was interested in such a variety of styles," says Tessin. "He particularly loved the sound of the Jimmy Lundsford Band from the '30s, and that of Count Basie in the '40s," explains Tessin, and the young "composing cats" in the band, like Larry Dwyer, "were turning out Lundsfordesque arrangements."

Dee Dee Garrett was lucky — in 1969 John Garvey's big band was a great place for a young jazz musician to be. Besides, the opportunity would prove personal as well as professional. She married one of the most talented members of the band, Cecil Bridgewater. Cecil and Ronnie Bridgewater were third-generation musicians. One of their grandfathers, Tuscola-born Preston Bridgewater, played trumpet for the Ringling Brother's circus. Their other grandfather, Ray Scott, played saxophone and directed a popular Champaign dance band known as Ray Scott and the Foot Warmers. Their father, Cecil, played trumpet with the US Navy Band during World War II; their mother, Erma, was a pianist. Their uncle Pete, a bass fiddle player, was Jazz DJ for WDWS for many years.

"Dee Dee was good, but Cecil was really good!" growls the ever-opinionated John Garvey. After graduating from the UI in 1970, Cecil moved to New York City, where he was invited to join Horace Silver's ensem-



Dee Dee Bridgewater today.

way. (She won a Tony for creating the role of Glinda the Good Witch in *The Wiz*, directed by her new husband, Gilbert Moses.)

As it turned out, the Champaign connection was not dead, only dormant. An Impulse release (*Dee Dee Bridgewater Live in Paris*) recorded in 1986 at The New Morning Cafe, reveals Dee Dee alive and well and making her way back to jazz. In 1990 she signed with Verve and returned to the music of Horace Silver that she had come to know when she and Cecil first went to New York. The recording of Dee Dee singing Silver's tunes (*Love and Peace*, Verve, 1995) was well-received.

In 1990, Ella Fitzgerald was too ill to perform at the Montreal Jazz Festival, and Dee

In January 1997, Dee Dee was invited to perform at the Schomburg Center in Harlem. She invited Cecil Bridgewater to join her, and Cecil invited his brother Ronnie. "It was the first time we were on stage together in 25 years" says Cecil. It went so well that Dee Dee asked Cecil to coordinate the big band portion of the Ella project. Why did his former wife choose him for the job? "Dee Dee was confident I could do it. She knew I knew her voice, and that I could challenge her musically to rise to her highest level."

Not only did Cecil write for the big band, he also hired the players, and directed the band for the recording of *Dear Ella* in February 1997. Later that spring he joined Dee Dee in Los Angeles to help with the mixing. In July of 1997, Dee Dee was invited to bring the tribute to Ella to the JVC Jazz Festival at Avery Fisher Hall, in New York City. She again asked Cecil to put together the band.

The *Dear Ella* album would win a Grammy that fall. Does its success mean Cecil and Dee Dee will work together in the future? "She called me a month ago," says Cecil, "asking me to write some trio arrangements for more of Ella's compositions. I am almost finished with them."

Is Dee Dee Bridgewater as good as Ella Fitzgerald? "She has her own individuality which is reminiscent of Ella's," muses Jerry Tessin. "Lots of people have tried to imitate Ella. Dee Dee is one of very few who comes even close."

"She is one of the premier jazz singers of today," says long-time family friend and Indiana-based band leader Tony Zamora. "She extends herself with real warmth!"

the following year.

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In 1969 it was John Garvey who was collecting jazz talent. A violist by training, a member of the famed Walden String Quartet, he had a tremendous appetite for music, old and new. "Garvey was unique," says former band member Jerry Tessin, now UI head of Continuing Education and Public Service in Music. "He ran the band like a chamber orchestra or a new music ensemble. He was after something unusual, in the blends and balances of the sound. He was not interested in the 'dead level.'"

Garvey had the vocabulary and personality to command attention. The musicians attracted to him had to have both intellect and "chops" to hang with him. An amazing collection of musicians had just that, including two young men from a musical family in Champaign, trumpet player Cecil Bridgewater and his sax-playing brother, Ronnie.

Besides the State Department tour in 1969, the UI Jazz Band won the Collegiate Jazz Festival several years in a row. Willis Conover, Voice of America's Jazz MC, invited the band to play the New Orleans Jazz Festival in 1970, a rare invitation for a

professional. She married one of the most talented members of the band, Cecil Bridgewater. Cecil and Ronnie Bridgewater were third-generation musicians. One of their grandfathers, Tuscola-born Preston Bridgewater, played trumpet for the Ringling Brother's circus. Their other grandfather, Ray Scott, played saxophone and directed a popular Champaign dance band known as Ray Scott and the Foot Warmers. Their father, Cecil, played trumpet with the US Navy Band during World War II; their mother, Erma, was a pianist. Their uncle Pete, a bass fiddle player, was Jazz DJ for WDWS for many years.

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Vocalists Dee Dee Bridgewater and Don Smith (far left) with the UI Jazz Band, directed by John Garvey (far right), in 1969.

ble. He soon brought Dee Dee to New York. The couple joined the Thad Jones/Mel Lewis Orchestra and played every Monday night at the Village Vanguard.

The Dee Dee Bridgewater-Champaign jazz tether did not survive the big city. Dee Dee's and Cecil's marriage came to an end in 1974, and they went their separate ways. Cecil would join up with Max Roach and stay with him for twenty years. Dee Dee would leave the straight-ahead jazz life for other forms of pop music, film, and Broad-



Dee Dee Bridgewater today.

way. (She won a Tony for creating the role of Glinda the Good Witch in *The Wiz*, directed by her new husband, Gilbert Moses.)

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In 1990, Ella Fitzgerald was too ill to perform at the Montreal Jazz Festival, and Dee

Dee Bridgewater was asked to fill in. As part of that performance Dee Dee and the great guitarist Joe Pass paid a thirty-minute tribute to the ailing singer. They repeated their salute to Ella at the 1991 Marcicac Jazz festival in France. In 1996 the legendary bass player Ray Brown, who had been married to Ella Fitzgerald, invited Dee Dee to perform with him on the European tour that marked his 70th birthday. Brown encouraged her to follow her instincts and do the full-scale tribute to Ella that resulted in *dear Ella*.

Dee Dee Bridgewater today. She again asked Cecil to put together the band.

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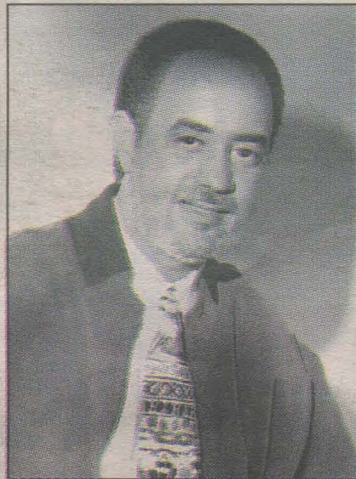
Because this is Champaign and the Bridgewaters are jazz royalty here, it's appropriate to let Cecil have the final word. As far as scating goes, Cecil says, "Ella had her influences. The big bands and small groups she played with determined her approach. Likewise Dee Dee. People often ask me whether Dee Dee scats like a trumpet player because she was influenced by me. I point out that her father was a trumpet player, too. I can't compare Dee Dee to Ella. But I can compare Dee Dee today to 25 years ago. She was always a great singer, now she is a great performer. She can take the audience where she wants them to go. To me that's what matters."

Jazz Alert: Cecil and Ron Bridgewater, Don Smith, and Tony Zamora will play for the Black Alumni Reunion Weekend on Friday, September 25, at 9 pm in the Courtyard Cafe of the Illini Union.

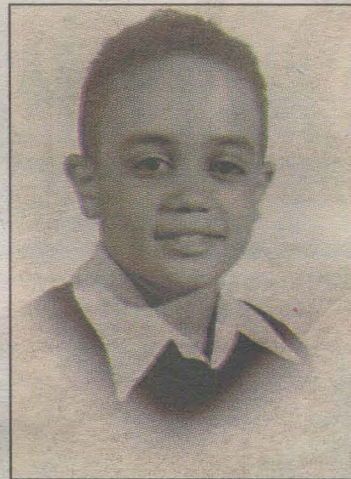
Top photo by Neri Oodo. Bottom photo courtesy of Jerry Tessin.

Then he took me to hear Louis Armstrong and I was, like, there is another trumpet player in the world.”

—Cecil Bridgewater



Cecil Bridgewater



Cecil Bridgewater age 7

JAZZ COM

Jazz great Cecil Bridgewater returns to his h-

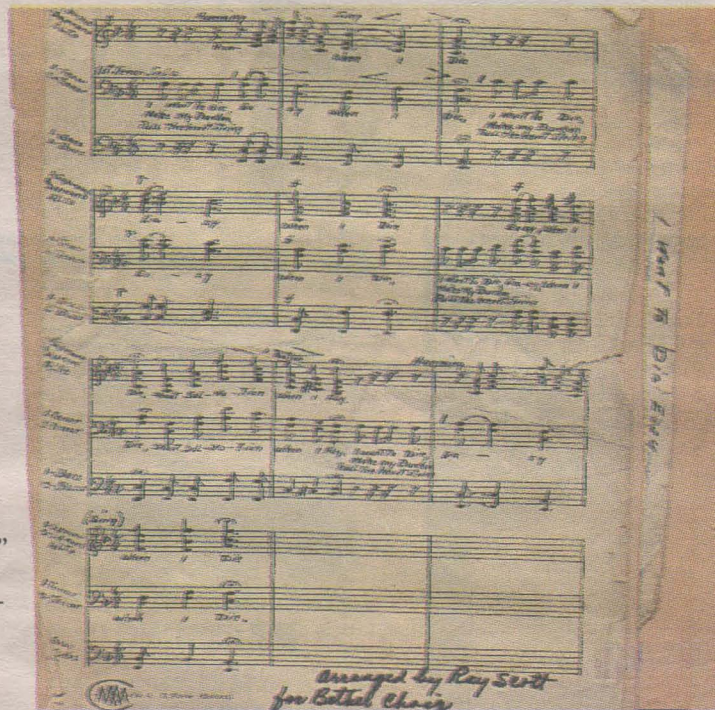
By **MELISSA MERLI**
NEWS-GAZETTE
STAFF WRITER

URBANA — Once, during his program “Jazz from the Kennedy Center,” the jazz pianist, historian and educator Billy Taylor asked trumpeter Cecil Bridgewater about his career. Bridgewater replied that he had accomplished more than he ever thought he would.

“I got a chance to meet a lot of people and to perform with them,” he told Taylor. “I’ve really been blessed from that standpoint. People who I thought would never know my name — I got a chance to meet and perform with them.”

“That’s been a thrill.” Those players include jazz greats Horace Silver, Thad Jones, Mel Lewis, Jimmy Smith, Dizzy Gillespie, Miles Davis and Art Blakey. Now Bridgewater, who developed his chops in Champaign-Urbana, returns to his hometown for a weeklong residency at Krannert Center for the Performing Arts, the first of three for him over the academic year.

As part of the Jazz Threads initiative, Bridgewater will engage in a variety of master classes



An arrangement by Ray Scott, Cecil Bridgewater’s maternal grandfather.

and other events over three weeks. He will be here next week and again in December and March. His first week will culminate with a concert at 7:30 p.m. Sept. 27 at the Krannert Center.

There, Bridgewater will perform with a band that he put together for the show: Mulgrew Miller on piano, Kenny Davis on bass, Carl

Allen on drums, and his younger brother, Ron Bridgewater, on saxophone. The first three are jazz musicians based in New York. Ron Bridgewater is a UI professor of saxophone who once played with his older brother in the Thad Jones-Mel Lewis Orchestra. A “Talk-back” with the artists will follow the concert.

While in town, Bridgewater and his guests will lead sessions and master classes in local schools and will jam Tuesday night at the Cowboy Monkey in downtown Champaign.

“It’ll be a good reinforcement if we can get the people who are coming to perform to go into the community and classrooms,” he said. “I find that’s something that’s badly needed, in some cases. Jazz is not the kind of music you hear all over the dial or on television.”

He noted that Jazz Threads, an ambitious project to revive the local jazz scene, involves both town and gown. “I can be a good connection there,” Bridgewater said. “I’m from the community and I went to the university.”



Bridgewater on trumpet and brother Ron Bridgewater on saxophone.

ES HOME

oots for a weeklong musical residency



The Bridgewater Brothers
Cecil Bridgewater, left, and Ron Bridgewater



Bros. circus band in 1908 featured Cecil Bridgewater's grandfather, Preston Bridgewater, on cornet.

Where to find

In addition to his Sept. 27 concert at the Krannert Center, jazz trumpeter and educator Cecil Bridgewater will be involved in a variety of presentations next week.

Bridgewater and his guests — jazz musicians Mulgrew Miller, Kenny Davis and Carl Allen, all from New York — will conduct clinics and master classes for jazz band students at Champaign Central High School, Edison Middle School, Parkland College and the University of Illinois.

Bridgewater, a native of Champaign-Urbana and a UI graduate, also will speak and perform at the following public

Bridgewater was, in fact, a key player in the local jazz scene in the late 1960s. He left in 1970 for New York City to further his career, first working in pianist Horace Silver's band and then with other groups. He became a regular member of the bands of drummer Max Roach.

Over the decades, Bridgewater, now 65, has built a reputation as a hard-working and versatile musician, a seasoned trumpeter and flugelhorn player, a composer, arranger, producer and jazz educator. He teaches through community programs such as JazzMobile and is an adjunct professor — he jokes that he's a full-time adjunct professor — at the New School for Social Research, the Manhattan School of Music, the Brooklyn Conservatory and William Patterson College.

As for his trumpet performance, one reviewer wrote that Bridgewater "tends to play t



The Bridgewater Brothers

Cecil Bridgewater, left, and Ron Bridgewater, right.



The Max Roach Quartet



Cecil, left, with Odean Pope, Javon Jackson and Willie Hall at the legendary Blue Note Club.

Where to find Cecil Bridgewater in C-U

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Bridgewater, a native of Champaign-Urbana and a UI graduate, also will speak and perform at the following public

events, all of which are free:

- “Know Your University” series, noon Tuesday at the University YMCA, 1001 S. Wright St., C.
- Jam session at Cowboy Monkey, 6 Taylor St. in downtown Champaign, 9 p.m. Tuesday. Musicians of all ages and listeners are invited to hear Bridgewater and the local jazz ensemble Chambana along with other guests. No cover charge.
- Jazz Forum by Bridgewater and his guests at noon Friday, Sept. 26, in Room 25, Smith Memorial Hall, 805 S. Mathews St., U.
- An Arts for Kids event for students in grades one through four at 1 p.m. Saturday, Sept. 27, at the Krannert Center for the Performing Arts, 500 S. Goodwin Ave., U. The event is free, but tickets are required. Call 333-6280 for ticket information.
- Bridgewater and his guests will appear on radio programs throughout the week, including between 8 and 9 p.m. Tuesday and 10:30 a.m. next Friday over WEFT Radio (90.1 FM) and at 11 a.m. next Saturday on “Straight Talk Live” over WBCP (1580 AM) Radio. ■

Bridgewater was, in fact, a key player on the local jazz scene in the late 1960s. He left in 1970 for New York City to further his career, first working in pianist Horace Silver’s band and then with other groups. He became a mainstay in the bands of drummer Max Roach.

Over the decades, Bridgewater, now 60, has built a reputation as a hard-working and seasoned trumpet and flugelhorn player as well as composer, arranger, producer and jazz educator. He teaches through community programs such as JazzMobile and is an adjunct professor — he jokes that he’s a full-time adjunct professor — at the New School for Social Research, the Manhattan School of Music, the Brooklyn Conservatory and William Patterson College.

As for his trumpet performance, one critic wrote that Bridgewater “tends to play thought-

fully, almost coolly, using silence and simple phrasing, editing himself as he goes along.” Another wrote that Bridgewater, with the Roach quartet, “played thoughtful, low-key, beautifully constructed and subtly expressive solos in ... a warm and quite pure tone.”

Critics often mention his clarity of tone. Neal Tesser of The Chicago Sun-Times wrote that “Bridgewater is a player of such marvelous clarity, one would think his horn had been crafted by Steuben glass.”

Some jazz lovers believe that Bridgewater is underrated, or not as well-known as he deserves to be. Bridgewater says that comes with the territory. He related that he once searched on the Web for his grandfather, Pre-



Darrell Hoemann/The News-Gazette

All that jazz

69/27/03

Cecil Bridgewater, a Champaign native and jazz musician, is in the first week of a three week Jazz Threads residency sponsored by the Krannert Center for the Performing Arts. Bridgewater, on trumpet, is accompanied by his brother Ron Bridgewater on saxophone, Mulgrew Miller of piano, Kenny Davis on bass and Carl Allen on drums. They were at the Friday Jazz Forum in Smith Music Hall in Urbana.

10/11/98 N.S.

Dee Dee Bridgewater is happy performing

By MARC LEE
The Dallas Morning News

No matter what you do for a living, there comes a point where you just want to pack it in. Even entertainers, whose jobs everybody covets, come to that point. Just ask jazz singer Dee Dee Bridgewater, who bought into the metaphor, literally.

"I went out and bought a new suitcase because I hated my suitcase after being on the road so long, I'm looking for something that says 'home.' So I went out and bought this huge

bag ... but it's NOT working!" she says with a laugh. "After being pretty much nonstop for the last five years, I am feeling burned out, and it's starting to affect me creatively, and it's not fun."

Bridgewater, a University of Illinois graduate, was back in Urbana last week for a lively performance at the Krannert Center for the Performing Arts. And her buoyancy belies any complaining.

For the past five years on the road, she has been performing songs from her two tribute albums, "Love and Peace: A Tribute to Horace Silver" and "Dear Ella," a collection of the late Ella Fitzgerald's memorable songs. She's singing standards, which singers such as Cassandra Wilson have set aside for reinterpretations of modern pop songs or post-modern blues; for lack of a better term.

Bridgewater has gone the pop route herself. After her debut with the Thad Jones and Mel Lewis band in the early '70s, she moved on to fusiony R&B records such as "Victims of Love," which included duet vocalist Ray Charles, and roles in Broadway musicals such as "The Wiz" and "Cabaret." But she says traditional jazz's musical challenges drew her back, despite the small audiences and low pay.

"I am a jazz singer, that's in my blood. With pop, you automatically get into auditoriums and I cannot fault anybody who wants to get a large as audience as they can, since I've already been there and done that," she says. "But maybe it's better to stick with something and really hone your craft and not be super super-rich. ... I thought an art form was dying and chose to dedicate myself to it."

That led to 1992's collection

of standards, "Keeping Tradition," and the Silver and Fitzgerald tributes. It also reminded her of a lesson Jones taught her decades ago. One that many musicians forget and, in the process, they wind up alienating their audience.

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"When I first started with
Thad Jones, I went in there
with the idea of 'total improv,'"

she says. "Thad pulled me aside
the first night and said, 'I don't
know why you singers think you
can do that. You must learn and
sing the melody. Because if you
sing the melody, people are able
to understand how amazing the
improvisation is.'"

That lesson certainly has
played a major part in Bridge-
water's career over the last five

years. She's accessible enough
to have received three Grammy
nominations and taken home
two, but she hasn't dumbed-
down her music.

"I find that people are more
accepting of me now," she says.
"I don't know if the Grammy
changed this for people, but
since winning the Grammy, ev-
erything I do is OK."

PETE BRIDGE WATER



Bridgewaters please Krannert crowd

By RICH WARREN
For The News-Gazette

There was no trouble over these Bridgewaters at the Tryon Festival Theater of the Krannert Center for the Performing Arts on Saturday evening, just great, solid jazz for more than two hours.

Trumpeter Cecil Bridgewater returned from New York to join his saxophonist brother, Ron Bridgewater, who is on the music faculty at the University of Illinois, and a pickup band to form a hot quintet.

The Bridgewaters were raised in Champaign-Urbana, and their family profoundly enriched our cultural community. The remainder of the group was Mulgrew Miller, piano; Kenny Davis, bass; and Carl Allen, drums.

While these musicians have worked together on occasion, they do not play or tour as a formal group. Thus, the performance Saturday evening was all the more impressive

as the players were exceedingly well-matched in talent and ability. They played together as if in the middle of a 50-state tour.

The quintet's repertoire focused on bebop and post-bop compositions, with originals by Cecil and Ron Bridgewater and by other jazz greats such as Joe Henderson, Sonny Rollins and Thelonious Monk.

However, breaking from this, the most magical moment of the evening occurred when Cecil performed Duke Ellington's "In a Sentimental Mood," in the second half. It felt like the audience had been waiting for this moment. While Bridgewater lyrically swooped through most of the work, he skied into a few moguls on his overly ambitious improvisations, which failed to detract from the overall beauty of his interpretation. He had joked about learning to sing, but the glorious voice of his trumpet certainly would have eclipsed all

REVIEW

but the most exceptional vocalists.

Unlike most jazz performances, Bridgewater affably provided lengthy introductions to most of the works, drolly told several jokes and gave an extended curriculum vitae for each of his associates.

He inquired more than once about the fate of the Illinois football team that was playing, but not necessarily performing, opposite him. Had the team performed as well as this jazz quintet, it would be on track for the Rose Bowl.

In introducing and crediting Allen, Bridgewater repeatedly referred to Allen's home, Milwaukee, as the jazz capital of the world. Obviously an inside joke, Allen might as easily have been credited as the drummer who made Milwaukee famous.

Unlike most drummers who

9/29/03
strut their sticks with either loudness or rhythmic frenzy, Allen concentrated on subtlety and softness. Especially evident on Bridgewater's "Louisiana Strut," Allen played with the delicacy and smoothness of sand sifting through an hourglass. He humorously waved his brushes in front of the microphone as if evoking sound from the very air. The piece opened and concluded with a drum solo, closing with Allen recreating a receding parade. Bridgewater's composition also evoked great ensemble playing.

While Cecil Bridgewater received star billing, he deferred to his brother frequently, and if anyone was counting notes, Ron played a few more than Cecil. Self-effacing Ron simply played his tenor sax for all that it was worth, anchoring the ensemble with its remarkably deep, rich sound. His performance was the least dramatic but most substantial of the evening, very evident in his solo on Clifford Brown's "Joy Spring." Then again, there was some drama when he demonstrated his technical virtuosity on the exceedingly difficult solo work "Monk's Mood."

The special moments occurred when Cecil and Ron played together, usually at the

beginning of each number. They were so attuned to each other rhythmically and harmonically that the trumpet and sax thoroughly intertwined.

The one major absence of the evening was an entire piece with the Bridgewater Brothers harmonizing and riffing off each other.

Davis played bass with great agility. His clever, facile solo on Sonny Rollin's "Oleo" received well-deserved enthusiastic audience recognition.

Miller's piano kept the ensemble melodically on track and cooking. Like his peers in the group, he directed his skills toward the music and the ensemble rather than showy solos.

Positioning the Steinway concert grand with its lid closed and a microphone shoved inside detracted from the tonal quality of the instrument and some of the nuances in Miller's playing.

The quintet closed with a humorous crowd pleaser they had performed earlier in the day at their children's concert, "(Meet the) Flintstones" co-written by the creator of the Flintstones, Joseph Barbera. Miller contributed a snappy piano solo.

Rather than an encore, the group played the piece a second time in a funkier groove that had pleased its earlier audience.

WKID on Philo Road 1953



HAROLD 'PETE' BRIDGEWATER - WDWS RADIO STATION

Change Constant For Announcing Staff

By JIM MANLEY
WDWS Chief Announcer
 The announcing staff of WDWS Radio is quite a cross section of talent, as well as personalities.

The staff now consists of almost a dozen voices, and the probability of further growth is evident in the goals and capabilities expressed by management.

From people hired yesterday to household names who have been here 22 years, it is a staff of professionals who desire to communicate with listeners. To inform and entertain with taste and quality is our aim, with an ear to you, our listeners for your wants and needs.

Long-time residents I know can reach back many more years than the brief seven years that I can recall since my employment here.

Change has been constant in many areas, especially in the improvement of facilities and equipment over the past four to five years.

When I arrived in the Champaign-Urbana in August of 1973, I was the sole full-time announcer employed, because other staff members were involved in sales and sports, in addition to announcing.

We worked in the corner of an enormous studio at a table with microphone and headphone and a set of gauges that showed outside temperature, atmospheric pressure and wind speed and direction.

On the other side of the studio stood a large grand piano. Engineer and announcer worked together every step of the broadcast day, even though we were physically in two different rooms separated by a large, twin-plated glass window.

The engineer had control of everything going out over the air, including turning on and off the announcer's microphone. Announcer and engineer worked together by means of hand signals and intercom, with the announcer directing when he wanted to talk, play music, commercials, etc.

Today we are in a modern studio, with modern equipment — almost a complete opposite of seven years ago, a much smaller room with a lot of equipment, and in control of 90 percent of what goes out over the air.

Another change in the last few years is that we are now playing primarily album cuts rather than singles, giving us a selection of more music and more durability in lasting air quality.

All WDWS announcers, full and part-time, have designated air shifts, but many times you will hear another voice at another time: The reasons for one

voice filling in for another are not only because of sickness or vacation, but also because the depth of the staff's talent affords versatility.

A relatively new voice is Pam McGuire of Champaign. Pam is in the Parkland College broadcasting curriculum and is employed part-time working week-ends. She has been with us more than six

months, and can be heard Saturday evenings and mid-day Sundays.

Pam has two years of broadcast experience.

Lyn Berglund started working part-time with us at the beginning of the year and short time later became a full-time announcer. Lyn has six years of experience in broadcasting, including college.

Monday through Friday

early and late evening is when Lyn does her thing on WDWS. In addition to her announcing responsibilities, Lyn is in charge of our public service department.

If you tune in to AM (1400) late Saturday morning and early afternoon you will be in touch with Joe Roark, who's been with us over a year and a half now. Joe will put you in



POPULAR WDWS ANNOUNCER PETE BRIDGEWATER SHOWS SOME OF RECORD COLLECTION ... name synonymous with jazz and big band sounds for 10 years

**STOP!
 LOOKUP...
 CHEER!!**

It's a Harlan E. Moore U.S.G. lay-in-panal acoustical tile ceiling. A nice way to top off any room!

Congratulations to WDWS on their expansion and wise choice of a ceiling.



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 BROADCAST PRODUCTS DIVISION**

Announcing Staff

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If you tune in to AM (1400) late Saturday morning and early afternoon you will be in touch with Joe Roark, who's been with us over a year and a half now. Joe will put you in

touch not only with a wide range of music, but information on it and the people who write it and do it.

Research is the name of his game, and he probably spends at least twice the amount of air time on it. He's had plenty of experience, with nine years under his belt.

Producer, farm news reporter, music lover, and much more in the way of filling the air waves up and out is Earl Roppel. He's worked at about half a dozen radio stations and has been a full-time announcer at WDWS the past two and a half years.

Earl has done most of the air shifts here already and all of them in his nine years in radio shows. He entertains and informs Monday through Friday during the noon hour and mid afternoon, as well as very early Saturday mornings.

Our only FM full-time announcer, with the advent of our new FM studio and equipment is "Deep John." John McGougan started with us three years ago, and the deep voice complements his music selection on our 50,000-watt stereo station every week-day starting at noon.

A relaxed voice is what he will share with you from his six years in the business.

Pete Bridgewater's name and the jazz and big band sounds have been synonymous for East Central Illinoisans for 10



WDWS CHIEF ANNOUNCER JIM MANLEY
... change, improvement constant

years. He has a slot several hours on Tuesday through Thursday nights and Sunday evenings with big band nostalgia, the passport to a unique and pleasant listening experience.

Pete's collection of records probably can't be duplicated. He has been a knowledgeable lover of music all his life and is of a family of professional musicians, qualities he has used to his and his listeners' advantage in 19 years of broadcasting.

It is hard to believe that someone in this business for 43 years is going stronger each year with a specialty. I say "country music", and immediately

you say "Joe Rider". The Country Gentleman has been there on WDWS when people are waking up for more than 23 years now, and everyone wonders how he does it each week-day morning from 5 to 6:30.

On top of early mornings, Joe does top-selling country music in the afternoons as well. He has to be writing a book now, because there is no other way to put his accomplishments and experiences on paper.

We have quite a staff, working together for one great output on two great stations. I extend a permanent invitation to keep listening, because we want you to know us.



BERIDGEWATER SHOWS SOME OF RECORD COLLECTION
z and big band sounds for 10 years

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Curacao, NWS

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P. M's. Quintet
~~Dr. Glen Cronkite Dr.~~
P. B. - Bass
E. England Jr.
Norm Landford
Beavis / Tenor Sax
Ethel Bridgewater - vocal
Club 4.5

3 1963



Norm Langford





ERMA + CECIL BRIDGEWATER

Bring Bridgewaters to Champaign Jazz Festival

By MAURICE MCKINLEY

Born and raised in Champaign, I attended local public schools and the University of Illinois, majoring in music education. I spent two years as a member of the UI Jazz Band under the direction of John Garvey and was active on the local music scene back in the 1960s and 70s.

Since returning to Champaign-Urbana I have been pleasantly surprised by the thriving jazz community. We are fortunate to have such a core of well-trained, experienced musicians who play many different styles of jazz. What is most impressive is the historical knowledge of jazz our local musicians eloquently share with their audiences.

6/27/01
GUEST COMMENTARY

As our community grows, the opportunity for new venues to showcase jazz and a broader fan base seem all but inevitable. The local jazz scene is quite healthy and in a significant growth pattern. Programs like the Krannert Jazz Immersions series and the recent 32nd annual Champaign Jazz Festival, held May 13 at Combes Gymnasium at Champaign Central High School, show that the structure is in place for the art form we know as jazz to flourish in our community.

The ability of the organizers of the Champaign Jazz Festival to get Champaign school

bands, as well as the University of Illinois Jazz Lab Band and the Parkland College "In Your Ear" Big Band, and to invite a locally trained musician of national stature (Kim Richmond) to participate is highly commendable. The continued success of the Champaign Jazz Festival shows a broad community effort to showcase locals who have made a contribution beyond our community.

Jazz is a music form created in America and deeply steeped in the cultural roots and experience of the African in America. Champaign-Urbana is fortunate to have numerous African-Americans who have made a measurable contribution to jazz. Les Hite, Brother

Jack McDuff, Jerry Valentine, Cecil Bridgewater and Ron Bridgewater immediately come to mind.

That is why I am dismayed and saddened that organizers of the Champaign Jazz Festival are not annually inviting our celebrated brother team of Cecil and Ron Bridgewater to participate. The community would benefit from showcasing their considerable talents. Cecil and Ron Bridgewater are not only world-class musicians but noteworthy jazz educators as well. Our middle and high school jazz students would benefit immensely from workshops under their direction.

I would appreciate answers to a few questions concerning The Champaign Jazz Festival:

Is the Champaign Jazz Festival a private affair?

How does one become a member of the Festival selection committee?

How does one get invited?

Why am I concerned?

Because the Bridgewater brothers are caring, nurturing humanitarians who possess world-class talent. Both are home-grown gems of our diverse community who should be celebrated and included in forums for our youth and music lovers to enjoy.

Maurice McKinley is the director of education and youth development at the Champaign County Urban League. A former professional musician in New York, he is a drummer who plays with various local jazz bands.



Encouraged by his musical family, Cecil credits a childhood trip with his father to Huff Gym to hear Louis Armstrong with inspiring him to be a trumpeter "just like Armstrong." After gaining valuable experience with local bands including his Uncle Pete's dance band and his high school band, and tours abroad with the award-winning U of I Jazz Band, Cecil Bridgewater moved to New York, where he soon found himself playing with and arranging music for Max Roach, Horace Silver, and the Thad Jones/Mel Lewis Orchestra.

Renowned jazz trumpeter, educator, producer, arranger, and composer Cecil Bridgewater "comes home" as the focal point of Krannert Center's Jazz Threads, a season-long community engagement project exploring jazz.

Cecil Bridgewater, jazz trumpeter
Arts for Kids
Jazz for the elementary student

A family-friendly event specifically for 1st through 4th grade students and their parents.

Saturday, September 27, 2003, 1:00pm

Tryon Festival Theatre

Krannert Center for the Performing Arts

Admission is free/Tickets required.

Parking is available in Krannert Center's parking garages, accessible from both Illinois and Oregon Street.


Join us for an introduction to jazz and two of the music's legends, Louis Armstrong and Duke Ellington!

Champaign native and jazz trumpeter Cecil Bridgewater and members of his ensemble will lead a performance/demonstration in which they introduce children to the repertoire of Armstrong and Ellington, the instruments they play, and how they work as a team to create the music.

For tickets, contact the Krannert Center ticket office at 333-6280 or e-mail kran-tix@uiuc.edu. Seating is limited.

jazz
threads

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 Krannert Center

RINGLING BROTHERS ANNEX BAND
1908



PRESTON BRIDGEWATER, TRUMPET
(SECOND FROM RIGHT, FATHER OF
CECIL BRIDGEWATER, Sr.)



JAZZ THREADS

Thursday in

etc!

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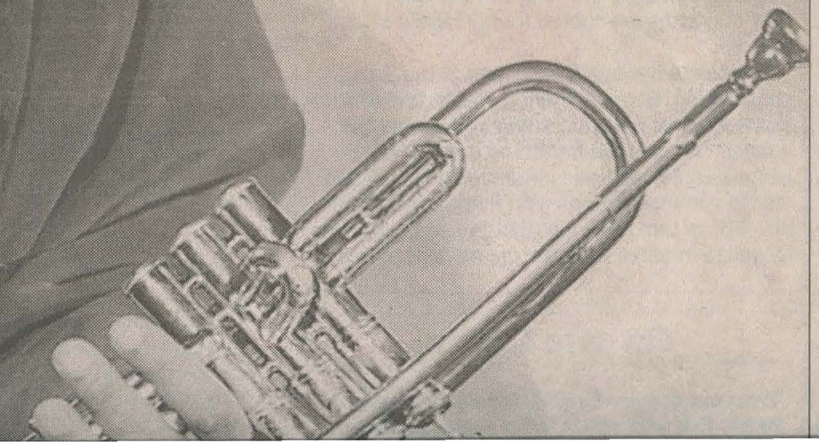
Thursday, September 18, 2003

The News-Gazette®

Jazzed

Cecil Bridgewater brings
the excitement home to C-U
— PAGE 12

ALSO:
Guitarist Leo Kottke
coming to the Virginia
— PAGE 3





C-U soaks up the Bridgewaters' talent

By RICH WARREN
For The News-Gazette

URBANA — Signs welcoming drivers into Champaign and Urbana proclaim our cities "Home of Miss America 2003." I respectfully submit we add signs that say "Home of the Bridgewaters."

Even though Cecil and his former wife, Dee Dee, now live elsewhere, their musical hearts and souls remain here as evidenced in an unusual performance Saturday evening in the Tryon Festival Theatre of the Krannert Center for the Performing Arts. Local resident Ron Bridgewater joined his brother for several selections, and the Bridgewater extended family was in the audience.

The University of Illinois Concert Jazz Band led by Chip McNeill — augmented by an orchestra with Dorothy Martirano as concertmaster — accompanied the Bridgewaters.

Considering the Bridgewaters rehearsed with the band only twice and the orchestra once, the overall sound was amazingly cohesive. Allowing for the various missteps by Cecil and Dee Dee and that Cecil conducted while playing the trumpet, the band gave a better than great presentation.

The evening was not a performance in a typical or expected sense. The event was more of a homecoming, class reunion and get-together in the Bridgewaters' extended living room. Cecil, a trumpeter, composer and arranger, and Dee Dee, a vocalist and actress, launched their careers here in the late 1960s and early 1970s; saxophonist and composer Ron remains on the UI faculty. Cecil and Dee Dee exchanged a great deal of friendly banter and effec-

The greatest moment of virtuosity occurred during Ron Bridgewater's solos in the performance of his tribute to John Coltrane, 'Dear Trane.' His spellbinding technique showed how he could emulate without imitating, unleashing all the sonic abilities of his instrument.

REVIEW

led to almost as much talking as music in the two-hour, 15-song celebration. Ron communicated solely through his saxophone, standing frozen like a statue, stage right.

The evening stumbled to life with a rather jagged rendition of Ron Bridgewater's tribute to Cannonball Adderly, "Cannon's Samba." The band-orchestra, the sound technicians and the soloists all strove to come up to speed, which they did by the spot-on ending. Dee Dee Bridgewater entered for the second number a bundle of nerves, which took a while to calm. After a false start on "Undecided," which she had recorded on her CD tribute to Ella Fitzgerald, she started finding her bearings with some impressive scatting. While Dee Dee may lack the richness and range of Fitzgerald's voice, she certainly possesses the smarts and substance.

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Dee Dee returned after intermission, relaxed and

internationally famous. She wrapped herself around Cecil's arrangement of George Gershwin's "Lady Be Good," which proved only a warm-up for the piece by Kurt Weill and Ogden Nash, "Speak Low," from the show "One Touch of Venus." Cecil warmed to the occasion with a triumphant trumpet solo and then they engaged in a captivating trumpet and vocal duet, one of the high points of the evening.

The couple performed several of Cecil's unique arrangements of Kurt Weill's music from their "This Is New" CD. While it is safe to say it is far from the way Weill envisioned his music, if he heard Cecil's arrangements and Dee Dee's vocals, he would probably appreciate them for their intelligence and sizzle. Their version of "Alabama Song" as a blues number was especially intriguing, aided by the Ron and Cecil sax and trumpet solos and interplay.

The performance of "Love and Harmony," an early composition by Cecil to which Dee Dee set words when they were in love (as Dee Dee revealed), proved a particularly poignant moment. They revived the song for this concert, and even though it is a work of young artists, it was a delight.



Heather Coit/The N

Dee Dee Bridgewater belts out an Ella Fitzgerald tune as Cecil Bridgewater conducts the University of Illinois Concert Jazz Band during a performance at Tryon Festival Theatre at Krannert

Center for the Performing Arts in Urbana Sunday. Cecil Bridgewater's brother, Ron Bridgewater, also performed on stage with saxophone.

Ron dedicated his "Never Too Young To Dream" to his daughter, and it documented the depth of his melodic abilities. This is the kind of work that easily becomes a standard. The trumpet solo complemented the sweetness of the tune.

The concluding piece, "In the Open," written by Ron, featured a number of first-rate solos from the jazz band, including trombone and vibes. The beauty of Cecil's arrangement was the supercharged horn section that came in after each solo.

After a standing ovation the orchestra left the stage leaving Dee Dee, Cecil and band to improvise "September Song" by Weill and Bert Brecht. They had not rehearsed the piece, yet results concluded the festivities on a perfect note.

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SUNDAY
What's

By RICH WARREN
For The News-Gazette

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SUNDAY

WHAT'S

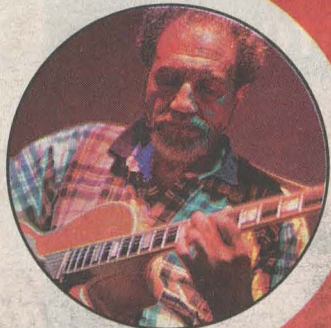


MISS MARY GRACE LOUIS

LOCAL ARTIST: Miss Mary Grace Louis, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Fred Louis of North 2nd Street Ass't directress of the Douglas Recreation Center and home teacher. She is a former graduate of the Art School at the U of I., receiving her Master and A. B.

degrees. A former teacher at Lane College, Va., and well known locally among her friends concerning her artistic touch ability. Recently in the Lounge of the Lincoln Public Library. Miss Louis was highly honored at Springfield, of which Mrs. Ester Phillips Kemp was chairman of the exhibit.

SEPTEMBER 12, 2003



12

A Listing of
Jazz Groups in
Champaign-Urbana



13

Stars and Essex
Green at the
Cowboy Monkey



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THE NEWS & ENTERTAINMENT WEEKLY OF CENTRAL ILLINOIS

*Cecil
Bridgewater*





13

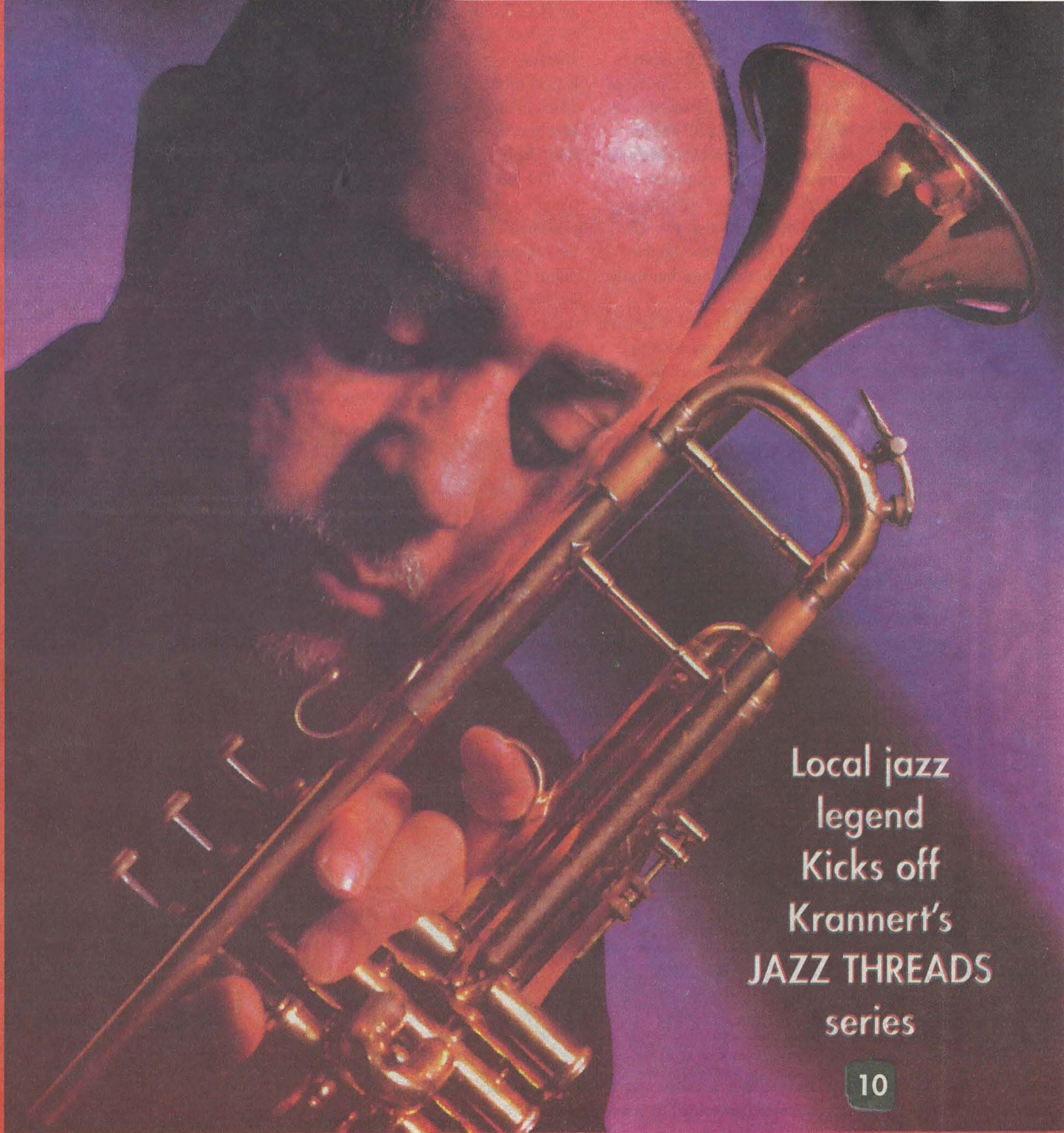
Stars and Essex
Green at the
Cowboy Monkey



16

Remembering
Warren Zevon

**MOVIES: AMERICAN
SPLENDOR, THE
ORDER, ONCE UPON
A TIME IN MEXICO**



Local jazz
legend
Kicks off
Krannert's
JAZZ THREADS
series

10

C-U Jazz All Dressed Up in New Threads Now Where Will It Go?

A JOURNAL OF THE JAZZ YEAR

PART I BY JAMIE HUTCHINSON

This article is first in a three-part series prompted by the Krannert Center's Jazz Threads project for the 2003-04 season. Jazz Threads kicks off Sept. 22 with the first of three one-week residencies by Cecil Bridgewater. Part II will appear Dec. 5 and revisit highlights of C-U's jazz past. Part III will appear Feb. 27 and look at jazz education in C-U.

Pick any genre of the local music scene, and you are sure to find old timers who will tell you that things aren't what they used to be in Champaign-Urbana. That may be particularly true of jazz, a music that has sometimes flourished way beyond what you would expect in a little corner of the world like ours.

For newcomers to C-U who look forward to a day when they might mete out the old timer's punishment on another generation of transplants, a twisted sort of hope does exist: C-U's jazz scene is good enough that you can easily imagine it being much, much worse. But for those who love the music more than they aspire to curmudgeonhood, hopes may be higher. Because several signs indicate that jazz in C-U is on the upswing again. Consider:

It's official: The University of Illinois School of Music has finally established a degree program in jazz studies. Under the direction of Chip McNeill, the program should attract more aspiring jazz musicians to C-U from the huge pool of young talent in and around Illinois—not to mention more music faculty with expertise in jazz.

Krannert Center for the Performing Arts, building on its popular Jazz Immersion series, has launched "Jazz Threads" for the 2003-2004 season. Jazz Threads will bring C-U native and prominent jazz trumpeter, composer, and teacher Cecil Bridgewater and guests to town for three one-week residencies aimed at boosting local jazz.

Three strong venues now anchor C-U's jazz scene: Urbana's Iron Post, Champaign's Two Main Lounge, and campustown's Zorba's, all of which offer jazz at least one night a week. Champaign's High Dive, Mike & Molly's, and Cowboy Monkey also regularly present jazz. In all, jazz is heard regularly or occasionally at over 20 venues around

Roberts up close and personal in a rehearsal room at Smith Music Hall, where he led a lunchtime workshop that was free and open to the public.

So count your blessings, Champaign-Urbanites. Trumpeter and retired UI jazz band director Tom Wirtel puts it this way: "People gripe about it after they've been here for awhile, but you know, they haven't had the advantage of being someplace else where there ain't nothing. And that gets old."

As jazz band director, Wirtel continued a longstanding interchange between UI jazz bands and local clubs and audiences. "It's the tradition now, and nobody would think of not having UI jazz bands and combos playing in clubs in town—no way that could happen. It's a very rich heritage." The current jazz director, Chip McNeill, who took over the position in fall 2002, agreed: "[Iron Post owner] Paul Wirth has been really terrific. ... We're just basically going along with what the tradition has been, having the bands play there."

The same tradition exists for Parkland College jazz ensembles, which perform regularly at Mike & Molly's and the Highdive in downtown Champaign.

With such healthy exchange between town and gown it's no wonder McNeill sees the new UI degree program in jazz as a shot in the arm for the entire local scene, not just the campus. "As we actually start getting majors, people that are actual jazz majors, they're going to be out in the community playing. They're going to get

out and support the music that's in those clubs. ... It's already happening." One example: Sean Parsons' new trio, made up of graduate-level recruits to McNeill's jazz studies program.

Meanwhile, Krannert Center's innovative Jazz Threads program is administering a shot to the other arm. Jazz Threads brings the campus together with local artists, schools, nightclubs and audiences in a variety of events centered around Cecil Bridgewater's three one-week residencies, planned for Sept. 22-28, Dec. 1-7, and March 1-7. Events on and off campus will include concerts, workshops, jam sessions, talks, even a pub crawl and "jazz vespers." Bridgewater



Mulgrew
Miller



Dee Dee
Bridgewater

least, not if the vision of Krannert director Mike Ross and the Threads committee, a diverse group of local jazz lovers, is to be realized. Ross describes Threads as a "catalyst" that may invigorate the local scene in the long term. "I got to know more about people involved with the downtowns, the parks, the schools," he says of the formative process that has led to Threads, "and virtually every time I would bring up the subject of jazz, people would respond. People had a vision of what this community could be if we were to support jazz in a more robust way, through a combination of what's going on at the Center, in the School of Music, the downtown development scenes in Champaign and Urbana, and Campustown, too."

THREADS' KNOTTY PROBLEMS

The diverse and creative Jazz Threads events planned for 2003-04 seem sure to succeed. On the other hand, the bigger vision shared by so many Threads participants, including this author, brings us face to face with some daunting challenges.

"Jazz is a hard sell," said guitarist LaMonte Parsons, who leads the house band for the Monday night jazz jam sessions at Two Main Lounge. While musicians play for the door at other local clubs, Two Main guarantees a set amount for its jam session band. That's an honorable precedent set by a club that has done as much as any to open its doors to live jazz; however, the club was forced to reduce the amount last summer because of low attendance. Parsons rightly believes

Pick any genre of the local music scene, and you are sure to find old timers who will tell you that things aren't what they used to be in Champaign-Urbana. That may be particularly true of jazz, a music that has sometimes flourished way beyond what you would expect in a little corner of the world like ours.

For newcomers to C-U who look forward to a day when they might mete out the old timer's punishment on another generation of transplants, a twisted sort of hope does exist: C-U's jazz scene is good enough that you can easily imagine it being much, much worse. But for those who love the music more than they aspire to curmudgeonhood, hopes may be higher. A degree program in jazz studies. Under the direction of Chip McNeill, the program should attract more aspiring jazz musicians to C-U from the huge pool of young talent in and around Illinois—not to mention more music faculty with expertise in jazz.

Krannert Center for the Performing Arts, building on its popular Jazz Immersion series, has launched "Jazz Threads" for the 2003-2004 season. Jazz Threads will bring C-U native and prominent jazz trumpeter, composer, and teacher Cecil Bridgewater and guests to town for three one-week residencies aimed at boosting local jazz.

Three strong venues now anchor C-U's jazz scene: Urbana's Iron Post, Champaign's Two Main Lounge, and campustown's Zorba's, all of which offer jazz at least one night a week. Champaign's High Dive, Mike & Molly's, and Cowboy Monkey also regularly present jazz. In all, jazz is heard regularly or occasionally at over 20 venues around town. And forget about the stereotypical smoky nightclub: you can listen to live jazz at happy hours and in bookstores, cafes and parks as well as small and large halls on the UI campus.

For a town its size, C-U is home to an unusual number of active jazz groups ranging in size from piano soloists to small groups to big bands, and in style from New Orleans traditional, to swing and bop, to postbop and avant garde. Several groups feature singers and invite audiences to dance.

C-U's local vitality adds value to the big name jazz shows that come through town. If you went home and hit the sack after leaving Krannert, you missed John Faddis jamming with UI students at the Iron Post, or members of the Lincoln Center Jazz Orchestra sitting in with local pros at Zorba's. And folks with an ear to the ground got to check out Marcus

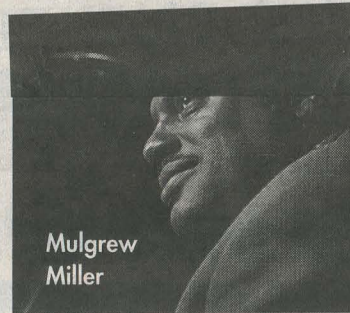
being someplace else where the music is old." As jazz band director, Wirtel continued a longstanding interchange between UI jazz bands and local clubs and audiences. "It's the tradition now, and nobody would think of not having UI jazz bands and combos playing in clubs in town—no way that could happen. It's a very rich heritage." The current jazz director, Chip McNeill, who took over the position in fall 2002, agreed: "[Iron Post owner] Paul Wirth has been really terrific. ... We're just basically going along with what the tradition has been, having the bands play there."

The same tradition exists for Parkland College jazz ensembles, which perform town and gown it's no wonder McNeill sees the new UI degree program in jazz as a shot in the arm for the entire local scene, not just the campus. "As we actually start getting majors, people that are actual jazz majors, they're going to be out in the community playing. They're going to get

out and support the music that's in those clubs. ... It's already happening." One example: Sean Parsons' new trio, made up of graduate-level recruits to McNeill's jazz studies program.

Meanwhile, Krannert Center's innovative Jazz Threads program is administering a shot to the other arm. Jazz Threads brings the campus together with local artists, schools, nightclubs and audiences in a variety of events centered around Cecil Bridgewater's three one-week residencies, planned for Sept. 22–28, Dec. 1–7, and March 1–7. Events on and off campus will include concerts, workshops, jam sessions, talks, even a pub crawl and "jazz vespers." Bridgewater's guests will include ex-wife and fellow UI jazz band alum Dee Dee Bridgewater, now one of the undisputed top singers in all of jazz, and renowned trumpeter Clark Terry, who used to play in this area with Bridgewater's Uncle Pete, the longtime local bassist, bandleader and jazz radio host who passed away last June. The grand finale will be a "jazz homecoming" scheduled for May 2 at the Virginia Theater, featuring Bridgewater (in a fourth visit!) along with current and former stalwarts of the C-U jazz scene, including Jim McNeely, a UI grad who is now one of the hottest jazz composers and bandleaders in New York.

But Jazz Threads won't stop there-- at



Mulgrew Miller



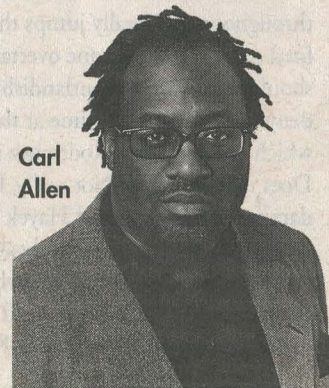
least, not if the vision of Krannert director Mike Ross and the Threads committee, a diverse group of local jazz lovers, is to be realized. Ross describes Threads as a "catalyst" that may invigorate the local scene in the long term. "I got to know more about people involved with the downtowns, the parks, the schools," he says of the formative process that has led to more robust way, through a combination of what's going on at the Center, in the School of Music, the downtown development scenes in Champaign and Urbana, and Campustown, too."

THREADS' KNOTTY PROBLEMS

The diverse and creative Jazz Threads events planned for 2003-04 seem sure to succeed. On the other hand, the bigger vision shared by so many Threads participants, including this author, brings us face to face with some daunting challenges.

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Lou Skizas, who describes himself as "part of the local jazz flora," is a regular listener at the Monday night jams, and he finds it inexcusable that jazz should be such a hard sell in a university town. "Don't tell me how sophisticated Champaign-Urbana



Carl Allen