

Forum brings them here

University promoters command respect for professionalism

By Brenda Thornton
Of the Emerald

In a one-room office in the EMU, three noisy phone conversations tangle with a budgetary disagreement between two administrators. An elderly woman tries persistently to reserve a room for her senior citizens' entertainment group. She just can't understand that it has already been booked.

Welcome to the EMU Cultural Forum office. Welcome to mayhem.

Somewhere in the confusion lies a student-run organization with a reputation for its professional attitude in putting on events, large and small.

Listen to Peter Afterman, promoter for the Greg Kihn Band, which played in the EMU Ballroom last Friday night.

"The people with the EMU Cultural Forum know what they're doing. From the advertising and box office to setting up the sound equipment and keeping security tight, they

worked like professionals."

And Afterman has had experiences dealing with college promoters.

"Schools often see setting up and working a concert as a prestigious thing, kind of glamorous," he says. "They don't realize the hard work that's involved and they don't have the basic knowledge to run it."

Laurie Jacoby, student coordinator of popular concerts, says that professional image is vital to the program. Without the reputation, promoters may hesitate to ask the Cultural Forum to handle another show.

Maintaining that image can be as hard as putting on the actual event, Jacoby says. A promoter may throw the whole show into the Cultural Forum's hands, trusting it to handle everything from local publicity to moving the equipment out after the gig is up.

"If we can't do a show correctly, we won't take the show," Jacoby says.

Promoters offer far more shows than the Forum can possibly schedule, says Frank Geltner, a University program consultant.

"There are so many considerations," Geltner says. The Forum has to question how well the program will go over and whether it will fulfill the needs of students.

And there are the practical considerations of space and timing.

For example, Geltner says MacArthur Court was originally built as a gym, not a concert hall. Unfortunately, the roof cannot be trusted to support most bands' fly sound systems which hang from the ceiling to project sound in all directions.

As a result, many acts have to be turned away from campus, but not necessarily from the Cultural Forum.

"We had to turn down Dizzy Gillespie due to schedule considerations," Geltner says. "However, we called the Forest Inn and they booked him. In return, tickets for the performance will be sold on campus."

Unlike professional organizations, profit holds little bearing on programming decisions. Geltner stresses that the Forum is not a "profit-making venture." Incidental fees support the organization.

"Out of 10 popular concerts, maybe two or three make a few dollars," he says. "We take that extra money, and apply it to a



Emerald photo

The Pat Metheny group was one of the acts booked by the Cultural Forum.

less profitable program or show. So what was made on one concert supports another, perhaps smaller, production."

Next year many of those smaller shows will be taken away from the University by the new Performing Arts Center.

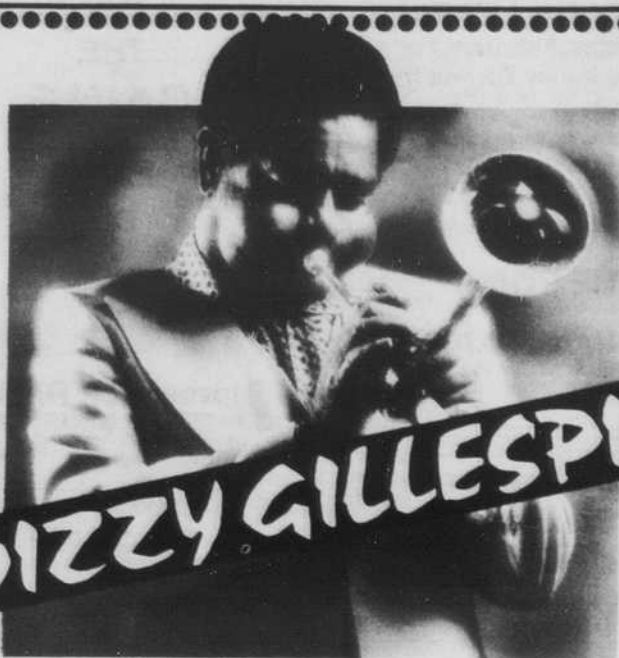
The ballroom shows, like Greg Kihn and Pat Metheny, are likely to be hit the hardest. But MacArthur Court will remain the major venue or hall in Eugene. The Performing Arts Center just can't match its 6500 to 7000 seating capacity, Geltner says.

Beginning in February, the Forum will begin its interviewing process to fill eight student positions on the committee. Geltner emphasizes that the entire student body has the opportunity to apply for a position.

"We don't search for experienced people. A person with experience may not gain as much from the position as a student with a lot of potential for growth and development," he says.

"So credentials are not the main emphasis. We take into consideration the organizational and personal skills an applicant could gain from working with the group.

"We do it tough," Jacoby says with a smile.



DIZZY GILLESPIE

Sunday, February 7th
TWO SHOWS 7:00 and 9:00 p.m.

TICKETS \$8.00 and \$7.00 RESERVED

Tickets available:

EMU Main Desk
Emerald Valley Forrest Inn
Creswell
Mazama Sporting Goods
Valley River next to Bi-Mart
Round-Tu-It Gifts
Cottage Grove
Lights for Music
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354 Gerlinger Annex Dougherty Dance Theatre
Students \$5.00/General Public \$6.00

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350 Gerlinger Annex

Int./Adv. Modern
Saturday, Feb. 20
10:30 a.m.
353 Gerlinger Annex

UO Students \$3.00/General Public \$4.50
Observers \$1.00

FREE LECTURE/
DEMONSTRATION:
Friday, Feb. 19
11:30 a.m.
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This residency is made possible in part by the Oregon Arts Commission and the Western States Arts Foundation with funds from the National Endowment for the Arts.

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