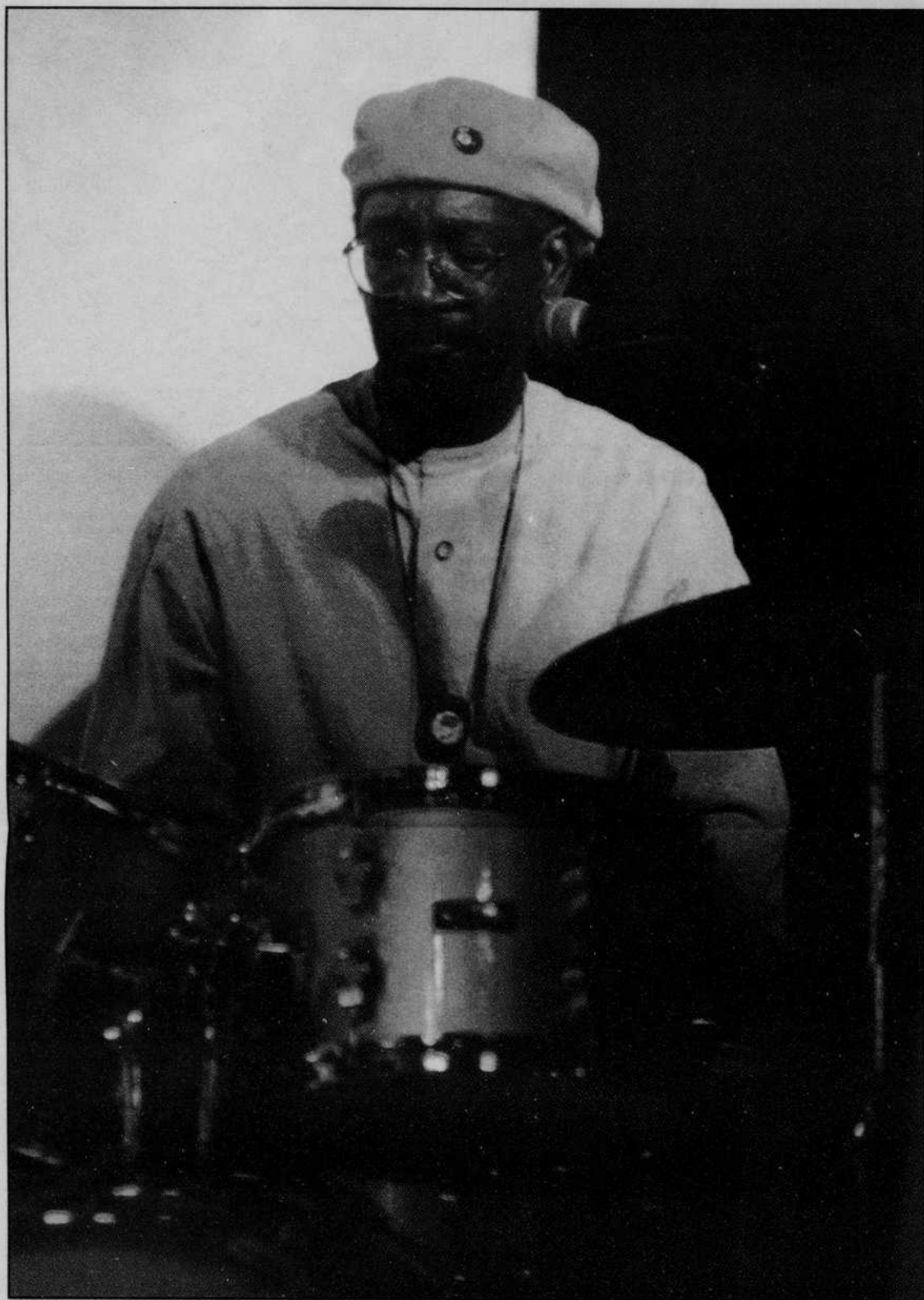


A Treasure-Trove of Jazz



Dan Brunell Emerald
 Drummer Kenny Reed (above), percussionist Rick Cobian (above center) and harmonica player Ty Cobb (above right) jam at Theo's Jazz Club on Tuesday night. With performances every Tuesday, Theo's provides a setting for a relaxing night out and for Eugene's jazz musicians.



Located in the downtown mall, Theo's Jazz Club offers a unique mix of music and atmosphere for an all-age audience

By Josh Ryneal
 Oregon Daily Emerald

This ain't your dad's jazz club. No drinks, no booths, no dim lighting, no dirty floors and no smoky haze wafting throughout the room. Theo's Jazz Club, a tiny storefront in Eugene's downtown mall, has created an upscale, stylish venue where jazz aficionados can gather and, if they want, even get up and perform.

From the unique tables imprinted with classic album labels to the striking paintings of famous jazz artists, Theo's looks like a fancy coffee bar. But when the lights go down, one quickly realizes that here, it's all about the music.

"Jazz is passed down from generation to generation," Brian Logan, manager and partner in the club, said. "Younger players can come and play with older players and foster a sense of community."

He pointed to the chairs. "Look at the chairs. They all face the stage, and you can see it from any place in the room," he said.

Logan, who admits that he "never listened to jazz" before opening the club, counts himself as a convert to the music after six months. "It's all I listen to now," he said.

His love for jazz shows in the effort he — and the other 17 partners

who collectively own not only the club but the adjacent bookstore and coffeehouse — put into making Theo's a true jazz venue.

"Other places in Eugene have live jazz, especially Jo Federigo's, but we offer exclusively live jazz," Logan said. "We have something unusual here; I tell the musicians no dinner music, but push the boundaries and do what you want."

Unlike Jo Fed's, Theo's doesn't serve food except for pastries, desserts and specialty coffee drinks. It's also a non-smoking, non-alcoholic venue, which was a decision Logan says was made in order to attract a younger-than-21 crowd and to avoid the hassles of an Oregon Liquor Control Commission license.

"I would really like to see something eclectic happen in regards to our clientele," he said. "Young people, old people, everybody."

The club is still a work in progress. Theo's is open Friday and Saturday nights for regular performances by noted artists, and Tuesday night offers a jam session hosted by a different performer each week.

Logan urges local jazz musicians to attend the jam sessions. "We've gotten a good response to the jam nights. We even get some high school students who are proficient enough to play here," he said.

Jake Svendsen, a local high school student who heads the Jake Svendsen Trio, has attended jam nights at Theo's numerous times and has begun playing regular dates at the club.

"People definitely pay more attention to you here," he said. "Plus, it's nice because I can breathe."

Julie Bounds, a University student and the trio's vibraphone — a percussion instrument like a xylophone — player, described the club as "one of the few places where it's all about the band."

"Everything, from the management to the audience, is really great," she said.

Jeremiah Harris, the band's bassist, likes the all-ages atmosphere and calls it a "nice, intimate venue."

Tuesday performances at Theo's are \$2, and weekends are usually \$3. Doors open at 8 p.m. The club, located at 126 W. Broadway, is a treasure-trove of local jazz waiting to be discovered.

