

But even after getting as many young bodies into the place as possible, Rieser says he realizes that accommodating today's young consumers may also require a looser definition of "jazz."

"We've looked at branching out a little bit repertoire-wise. Like jazz with a little bit of hip hop thrown in," Rieser says.

THE SHAPE OF JAZZ TO COME

Much like jazz itself, The Jazz Station's path forward is by no means straight and narrow. Rieser and his board plan to beef up grant writing, use rehearsal and recording spaces more heavily, offer more visiting artist workshops and continue to book bigger names. If sold-out shows become more common, the board has discussed moving to a larger space in the future.

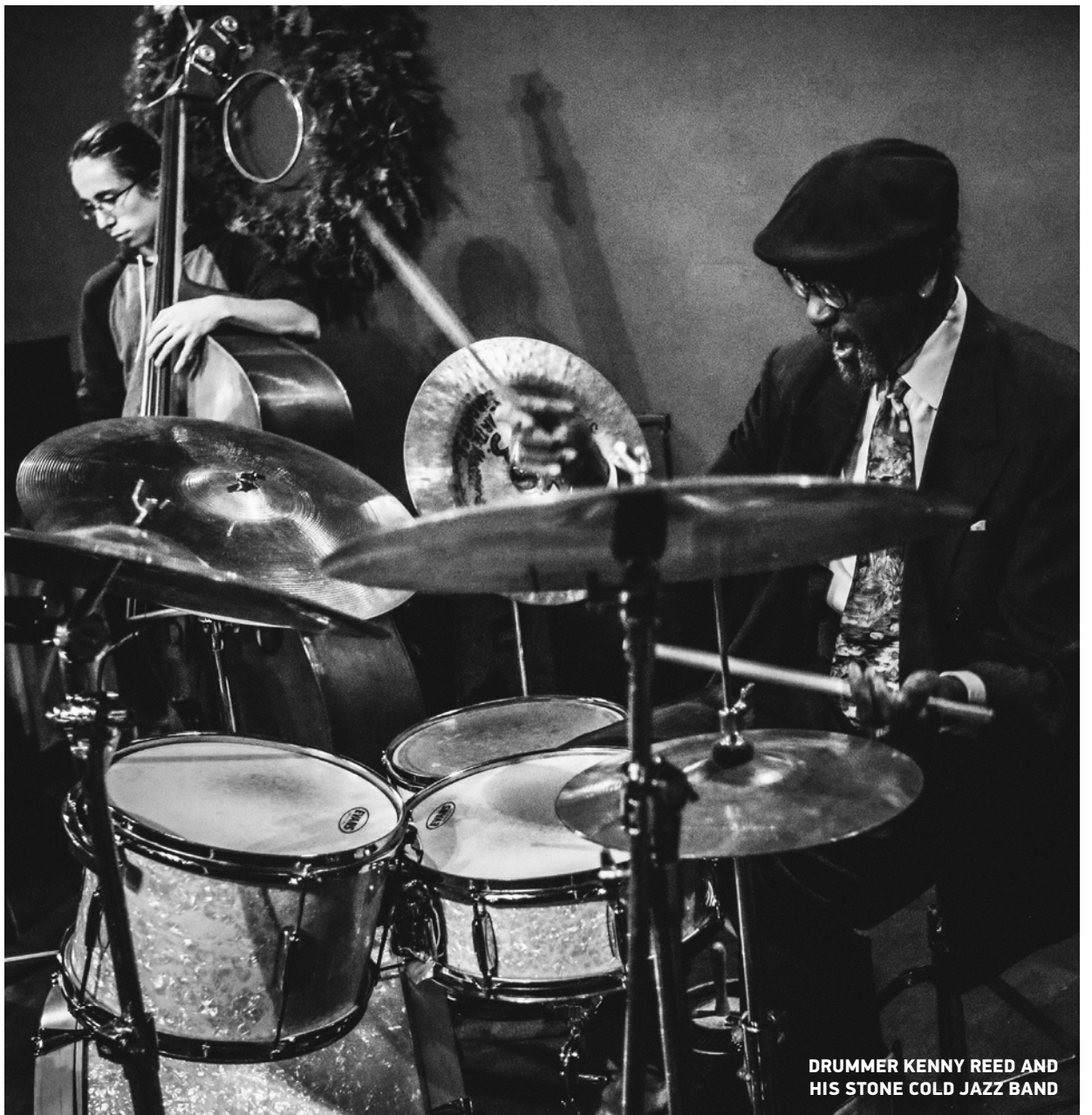
What the music will sound like down the road, though, is debatable. Loren, known for her cross-genre aesthetic, says she thinks jazz in the coming years will most likely sound less and less similar to the traditional, melody-driven structures of vintage jazz standards.

"Like anything genre-wise, it evolves," Loren says. "It changes, it moves with the times in order to stay relevant."

Even people like Ledgard, who's been listening to jazz since 1952, may be adapting to a departure from the classic sounds they're accustomed to. The more groove-based, avant-garde styles of recent days do indeed sound wildly different, but at least they're keeping jazz around.

"I will say this," Ledgard says, "that our younger musicians are playing jazz that I don't understand. But that's OK. They've just taken it to another step, another level. You know, they're just doing what ["free jazz" pioneer] Ornette Coleman did 35, 40 years ago."

This acceptance of change plays into the overall culture The Jazz Station seeks to foster. "Here's a place for intergenerational exchange of information — of culture," says Orsinger, face lit with an excited smile. "The telling of stories — that's part of keeping jazz alive." ■



DRUMMER KENNY REED AND HIS STONE COLD JAZZ BAND

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