



**TORREY NEWHART**  
PHOTO BY CYRUS SHIVA

Georgiev Trio took the stage. A high school saxophonist, Georgiev played a number of classic standards and his band didn't miss a beat.

**Alto saxophonist Idit Shner** played in the Israeli Air Force jazz band before moving to the U.S. in pursuit of her higher education. She earned her doctorate in saxophone performance with jazz studies from the University of North Texas.

Shner says she's played in a lot of different bands throughout her life, and she averages around 60 to 80 shows per year playing at The Jazz Station and at the Broadway House Concerts. She says the jazz scene in Eugene is distinctive.

"It's easy to overlook because a lot of people from Oregon are unaware that there are actually people from all over the world living in Eugene," Shner says. "Right after Hurricane Katrina, we had an influx of a few jazz players who were transplants." She says a few musicians stayed and played in Eugene for about eight years.

"We have people from Africa and Europe, and we have people who are on the road and tour a lot with national acts, so there are really a lot of different people doing a lot of different things."

Woideck says there are a handful of things that make the Eugene jazz scene great. "The Jazz Station is the best thing. It's great to play there because you get paid decently and no one is getting rich. It's really a pleasure. A lot of Portland people come down and drive four hours to work here because we have this great venue," he says. "People listen; it's a pleasant place."

Woideck is also the author of *Charlie Parker: His Music and Life*. He was a teenager the first time he heard jazz.

"When I was in high school there was a song that was a hit on the radio, and I found out that it was a jazz song," Woideck says. "I had no idea what jazz was. I bought the record and on the cover it said jazz, so I just thought, 'Damn, this sounds really nice.' You know how it is."

I do know how it is. I don't remember the first time I heard Charlie Parker, but I do remember attending a



**CHRIS HIGGINS AT THE JAZZ STATION**  
PHOTO BY TODD COOPER

Thelonious Monk celebration in lower Manhattan in 2008. I remember turning down the dial to 88.3, Jazz 88, anytime I switched on my radio in NYC. They played what became my favorites: standards, bebop, Charlie Parker, Dizzy Gillespie, Sonny Stitt, Art Blakey, Miles Davis, John Coltrane, Dexter Gordon and Sonny Rollins.

These names were the soundtrack on my daily commute. I crowded around jazz subway performers anytime they caught my ear, and I sought out musicians playing their music on the weekends by scouring the *Village Voice* for free shows.

Despite growing up in the late '80s and early '90s in South Carolina, where my grandparents heavily rotated Motown, Otis Redding, the Drifters, Chubby Checker, Diana Ross and the Supremes and old country music, I didn't hear jazz played on the radio. Then at 23, I became hooked on these crackly jazz recordings, and newly created Pandora radio deepened my curiosity.

The New York Public Library made these jazz musicians and their stories accessible to me.

Woideck saw Charles Mingus in New York City at the Village Vanguard in 1965 when he was sitting at the bar nursing a beer. "I was at the bar because it was cheaper, and you could stay all night. They didn't turn you out after the set and make you go out," he says. "I was at the bar, and Mingus came and stood right next to me."

The first jazz song he heard was "Desafinado."

"You know how it is, you go to a show, and they say, 'This is all Thelonious Monk music' and then you find some Thelonious Monk and then you find that Thelonious Monk's saxophone player is John Coltrane, and you think, 'Well, I'm going to listen to John Coltrane' — then you find out John Coltrane was influenced by Charlie Parker," he says.

"Now you're listening to Charlie Parker and you find out his trumpet player is Miles so it just starts spreading," he continues. "That was the same thing with me: I heard this thing, and I was told it was jazz and one thing lead to another."