

# HAPPENINGS



Marc and Bobby Gardner sample the best in fine wines.

(Photo: Richard Brown)

## Wine to suit your taste

"How's business?" is one of the first questions asked by customers when they enter Garner's Fine Wines located at 1115 N.E. Broadway in Portland. Possibly it's because of the economy and so many businesses are deciding that it's better to go out of business than barely get by... or maybe it's the first question people ask because they don't see the stock climbing the walls and crushing the ceiling.

"It's our way of saying that we care about what type of service we want to be to the general public." In other words, "Just because you walk into a wine shop and find that it is stocked with different wines, that does not assure you that the quality is there and that the wine you are about to purchase hasn't been sitting there 'past its time.'"

"Most of the warehouses are from 30 minutes to one hour away, so if you were to call us at 287-4120, seeking a wine for your dinner for that evening and we didn't have it in stock, providing you called one hour before your dinner we could get it for you; preferably two to three hours should elapse if it's red wine you seek, because you want it to breathe about 30 to 45 minutes, depending on the quality and longevity of the wine. You'd be serving the wine of your choice, well assured that it was properly stored in a constant temperature, as well as the fact that our shop inspected and guaranteed that the bottle was authentic."

Another reason why Garner's Fine Wines does not stock a huge inventory at the present time is because it is an Educational Retail Wine outlet, "The first of its kind." Garner's Fine Wines provides each Friday evening a tasting that allows customers to enter as a novice in the field of wines and work their way up to that of a connoisseur.

Experience is the key. Marc Garner is the owner, with nine years' experience, and Betty Garner is a six-year avid follower. Each owner has his particular field of interest in the business. Although they're husband and wife, and make a good business team, Marc's specialty is well-rounded—but he is a bit biased. That's when Betty enters the picture. "Not every customer has a palate so refined as Marc's so that's when I have to bring Marc back down to earth. He could rant and rave at a tasting all night long, and expect his audience to experience the same 'glow' he did when he first tasted that same wine," explains Betty.

While Marc handles the Friday evening tasting in lecture form, Betty's other duties consist of Comptroller, as well as display ideas. The shop is covered with maps from France that took six months to arrive in Portland and another six weeks to arrive at Garner's Fine Wine shop because they moved from an 18th & Broadway location in September. "They were well worth waiting for," Marc proudly remarks. When he lectures, he uses materials such as maps to show the regions where the wines originate.

The shop has wines from all over the world. They can tell you which Oregon wines are truly good value, or what land is conducive to what grape, such as the "Pinot growing well for Oregonians."

Stop in soon at Garner's Fine Wines, 1115 N.E. Broadway, Portland, OR. Tell them the *Portland Observer* sent you and receive 10% off your holiday wines, or 20% off a case.

## Jazz De Opus attracts the best

by Dick Bogle

Here is a jazz trivia question for those of you who like that sort of thing. During Dexter Gordon's 10-year self-imposed exile in Europe, what was the name of the only club in the United States where Dexter consented to play? The answer surprisingly is Portland's own Jazz De Opus. During his ten-year hiatus from performing in this country, Dexter would periodically come home to visit his family in Los Angeles and because of his friendship with Jazz De Opus owner Sam Pishue he came here to little ole Portland.

Jazz De Opus, located in the heart of Old Town, has an impressive track record of bringing top notch jazz performers to town.

Even just a few who have played there in the past ten years read like a who's who of jazz. John Klemmer, Cal Tjader, Earl "Fatha" Hines, Gabor Szabo, Milt Jackson, Sonny Stitt and Art Blakey and the Jazz Messengers all have graced the smallish Northwest club. If there is a rap against the establishment, it's that it is too small for the quality of entertainment it presents.

Another unique note of interest about De Opus is that it was built by Pishue in 1972 and he still owns it. How many other jazz clubs can make a similar statement?

First of all, Pishue is a stone jazz fan. He heard his first jazz concert back in 1954 when jazz impresario Norman Granz brought one of his Jazz at the Philharmonic groups to Portland.



Pishue remembers the rush of excitement when he heard Ella Fitzgerald, Gene Krupa, et al. Pretty soon he began writing letters to Granz asking permission to come backstage and meet the musicians. This was pretty heady stuff for a 14-year-old and was topped off when he and Dizzy Gillespie became regular chess-playing buddies. The next stage in the evolution of Sam Pishue the jazz freak was the saxophone. But like a lot of other jazz lovers, he soon discovered there is a distinct difference between love and talent. So down went the sax and eventually up went a business license.

Sam says when he was a kid instead of his bedroom wall being decorated with pictures of cowboy movie stars and military heroes, he had photos of musicians filling virtually every nook and cranny. He says, "Now I have people working for me that I used to idolize."

For the most part, Pishue has limited his jazz promotions to De Opus. There have been a few exceptions. In either 1965 or '66 he brought Miles Davis and the late pianist Vince Guaraldi to the old Oriental theater on Grand Avenue. Another time he brought John Handy to town for a gig at Portland State University. He has also booked some musicians at the Civic Auditorium. But his philosophy on promoting is simple. "I'm not in the promoting business. It's too risky—if it's going to work then okay."

But he is in the food and beverage business and is quite proud of his new addition at Jazz De Opus, a dining room called Opus Too.

It features a menu of broiled steaks and seafood but definitely not broiled in the usual manner. He uses rare Mesquite wood from the Southwestern United States and Mexico. He says he uses the Mesquite wood to broil in a completely natural way. The menu also includes homemade pasta and a selection of Mediterranean specialties.

The next big name to appear at Jazz De Opus is guitarist Charlie Byrd on December 12th.

(Photo: Richard Brown)

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