

A Taste Of Jazz

Event Sets Sail On Cruise Ship

By JOHN McGRATH

When "A Taste of Jazz" sets sail from downtown Portland and heads up the Willamette, it will truly be one of the year's major jazz events.

Focus of the three-hour sternwheeler cruise is a look and listen at what Portland offers in the world of jazz.

"A Taste of Jazz" takes off from Southwest Front and Stark streets at 4 p.m. Sunday, May 21, but not before patrons get a taste of the music they'll hear on board from Pat O'Neal's Riverboat Jazz Band, a six-piece dixieland aggregation based in Portland but known among tradi-



Mel Brown

tional jazz followers as one of the best in the nation. The band will begin playing dockside at 3:30 p.m.

Once on the sternwheeler "Columbia Gorge," Riverboat Jazz gives way to the Art Abrams Swing Machine. If anyone can claim the title of best jazz big band in the area, it's the Swing Machine.

Leader Art Abrams, a studio trumpeter who moved to Oregon from Los Angeles several years ago, has put together a 17-piece band that highlights the cream de la creme of jazz players in Portland.

Riverboat Jazz and the Swing Machine will split sets on the top deck of the paddlewheeler, giving shore-bound listeners a small taste of what those on the boat are getting all afternoon.

While the bands on the top deck are playing, a nonstop three-hour jam session will unfold below deck.

There's apt to be history made at this session, since it features a dozen of the best jazz artists in town. In fact, sponsoring Mt. Hood Festival of Jazz Instrumental Workshop organizers will have two rhythm sections, two guitars and four horns at the jam, making it an ongoing event and giv-



Ron Steen

ing these players chances to "sit in" with other artists they rarely get to hear or play with.

Those who remember the impact the onetime Cotton Club had on the jazz community will get a tug of nostalgia at the session. The trio from the '60s that featured drummer Mel Brown, guitarist Hank Swarn and organist Benny Wilson will be on hand to stir up those vibes.

And if veteran guitarist Swarn and young guitarist Dan Faehnle do a guitar "session" together, it'll just be one of many highlights on a balmy spring afternoon of jazz.

Tenor saxist Lee Wuthenow and alto saxist Warren Rand are slated to play and will solo alongside trumpeter Paul Mazzio and trombonist Jeff Usitalo.

Ron Steen is also featured. Bassists Andre St. James and Dave Captein join in the fun along with Benny Wilson and John Fresk on piano.

The cruise is limited to 400. Tickets are \$25, available at G.I. Joe's Ticketmaster and the Portland Center For the Performing Arts.

The Arts ENTERTAINMENT

C O N T I N U E D

Cheer's Norm Begins New Series




Brian Doyle-Murray (from left), Mark Christopher Lawrence, George Wendt, Kate Hodge and Pat Finn star in "The George Wendt Show," airing Wednesday at 8 p.m. on CBS, KOIN-TV Channel 6.

Bernie Mac Tickets Go Free To Youth

A limited number of free tickets and limousine service to Sunday's Bernie Mac concert in Portland is being donated to area youth as part of an effort to provide alternatives to violence and drugs.

Woody Broadnax of Unstuck Productions said 20 tickets are being donated plus two limousines for escorts by Roy Jay Enterprises. Unstuck Productions is also working with area schools in special programs to promote productive lifestyles, Broadnax said.

For information call R. Sherri Thompson at 282-1627 or 288-0884.



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