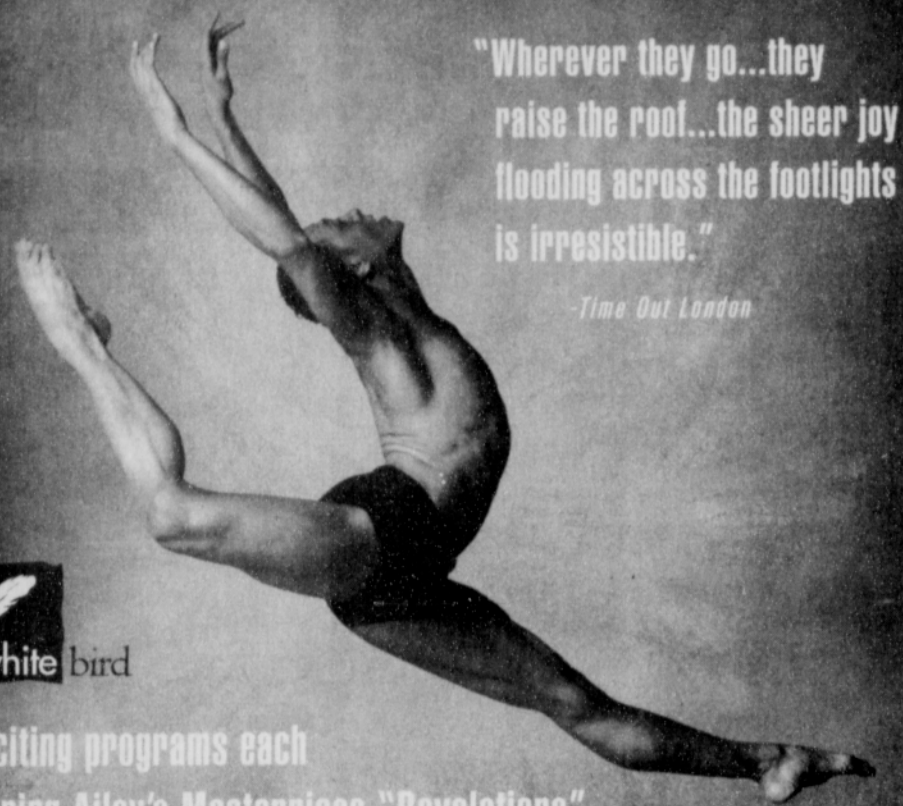


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FOCUS

Portland's Jazz History Spotlights

Fan base explodes with hotspot clubs

BY RON WEBER

JumpTown: The Golden Years of Portland Jazz 1942-1957 (Oregon State University Press, \$24.95) tells the story of how African Americans brought jazz to Portland and how the city grew into a major hotspot for jazz musicians.

Over one-hundred years ago, in 1905, a handful of black musicians began playing jazz in the basement of the Golden West Hotel, Portland's premier hotel for African Americans at the time. The hotel stood on the corner of Northwest Everett Street and Broadway.

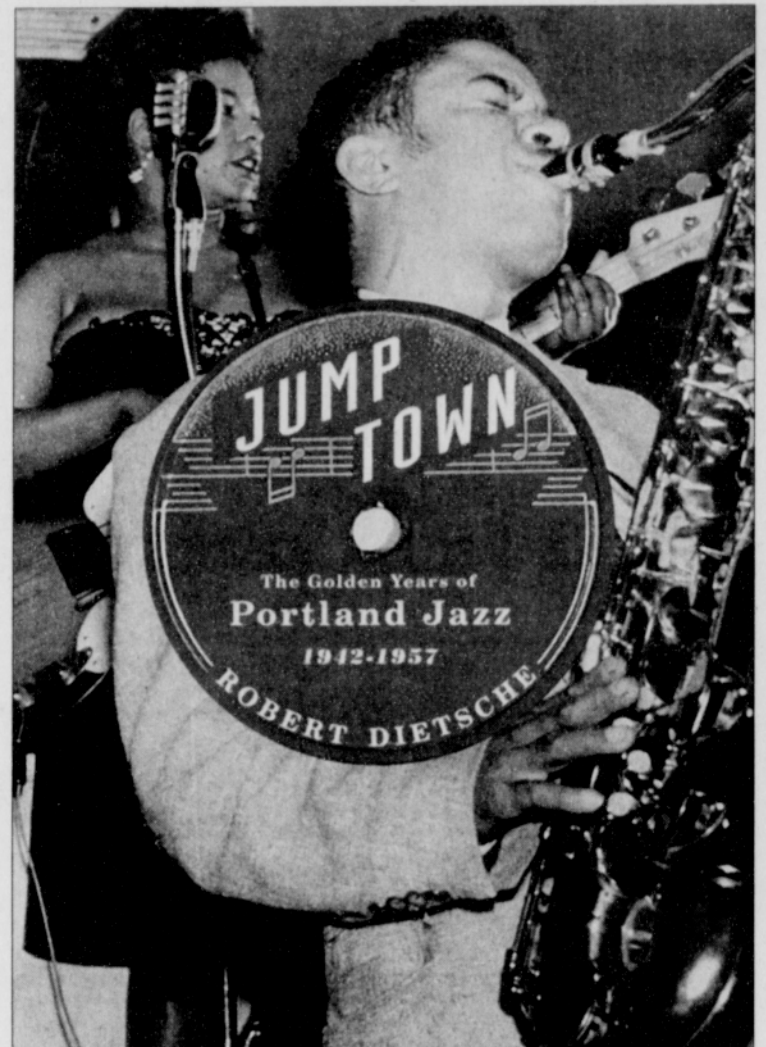
In the very early 1880s, there were just 52 permanent black Oregon citizens, most residing near the Golden West and the train station. Although it is now a low-income housing unit, the hotel still stands today.

In the early 20th century, jazz was slowly gaining fans and a few clubs popped up here and there. But by the 1940s, jazz was happening and the North Williams Avenue strip made it explode.

By the 1950s there were clubs in nearly every Portland neighborhood, reaching from Milwaukie to upper West Burnside to Jantzen Beach and even Vancouver.

The Williams Avenue clubs were open around the clock, seven days a week to entertain the thousands of shipbuilders who worked the three different daily shifts during World War II. One of the most popular was the Dude Ranch.

The Ranch was housed in a large brick building that still stands today at the east side of the Broadway Bridge, just a stones throw from the Memorial Coliseum. My father-in-law, Herman Jobelmann and the Hermann Jobelmann Band played five nights a week for the club when it first opened as a mostly white club in 1942. Jobelmann, 92, is still alive and active today. He is known for his nearly 50 years of service with the Oregon Symphony as its personnel manager and prin-



ciple bassist. He also spent decades with the Orchestra's Portland Youth Orchestra.

The jazz scene on the inner north-east side grew as Portland's African-American population grew in a neighborhood that existed before the construction of the coliseum.

JumpTown author Bob Dietsche did a superb job of recreating the "roaring 30s, 40s and 50s" in Portland's jazz history. His contributors included such local luminaries as Ted Hallock, Bob Trowbridge, Dick and Bob Cogan, Jim Swenson, Garth Miller and others.

Dietsche's wife Susan and Leslie Rosenberg were pivotal in the physical compilation of the book.

Also needing mention were the hundreds of local Portlanders who opened up their hearts to this project. While the list is too long, a few of them that deserve being mentioned are Sweet Baby James (James Benton), Bobby Bradford, Clarence Williams, Cleve Williams, Al Johnson, Hal Hart, Geraldine

Avery, Florence Mills Morton, Paul Knauls, Margie (Carol) Havlichek, the entire Amato Family including Diane Partain, and The Oregon Historical Society.

The Bob Thompson family and Bob Redfern contributed their huge collections of recorded live music from the period. These collections are the only complete recording of Portland's jazz history and will be respectfully preserved.

JumpTown was truly a joint effort of dedicated Portlanders and local jazz enthusiasts. It can be found in any of the major bookstores throughout the Portland area. Pick up a copy today and role back the time clock to one of the best periods in Portland history.

Ron Weber is a writer and speaker on African American history and a regular contributor to the Portland Observer. He spent seven years working on JumpTown with author Robert Dietsche, contacting scores of people involved in Portland's jazz history.

Reed College celebrates Black History Month 2006



Michael Eric Dyson
Lecture: "Come Hell or High Water"

7 P.M. | FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 17
TICKETS ARE NO LONGER AVAILABLE.

From his forthcoming book, Dyson speaks on what Hurricane Katrina revealed about race and poverty in America.



"The Incredible Journey of Jazz"
Concert and Lecture

2 P.M. | MONDAY, FEBRUARY 20
KAUL AUDITORIUM
FREE AND OPEN TO THE PUBLIC.

Co-sponsored by the Portland Jazz Festival, this program presents the story of jazz for middle-school children and their parents.



Ethnic Heritage Ensemble
Concert

7 P.M. | TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 28
ELIOT HALL CHAPEL
FREE AND OPEN TO THE PUBLIC.

This group of acclaimed, rule-bending musicians fuses traditional and popular African music in this avant garde performance.

For more information, visit web.reed.edu/black_history_month/ or call the Reed events line at 503/777-7755.

REED COLLEGE 3203 SE Woodstock Blvd. Portland, Oregon 97202

Jazz Comes Alive at Reed College 'Living experience' concert Feb. 20

Portland Jazz Festival and Reed College are teaming up to present "The Incredible Journey of Jazz," a special free Black History Month concert designed for middle school age children and their parents.

The 75-minute performance will tell the story of jazz from its roots in African music and culture, through its development in the United States, to its current role as one of America's most treasured contributions to world culture.

A jazz combo led by Portland jazz artist and Portland State University professor Darrell Grant will give the audience a "living experience" of the jazz art form with performances, narration, musical illustrations from different eras and styles, and characterizations of historical jazz figures.

The program is presented by the Leroy Vinnegar Jazz Institute, and by Ethos, a non-profit music center dedicated to the promotion of music and music-based education for youth in some of Oregon's



Jazz fans fill the seats at Reed College for the "Incredible Journey of Jazz."

most underserved communities. Auditorium at Reed College, for more information, visit web.reed.edu. The concert will take on Monday, Feb 20 at 2 p.m. at the Kaul