

B30 Province PreView Friday, June 2, 1995

PREVIEW

Mo' music and mo' laughter

Arts Club offers audiences Five Guys Named Moe

The Arts Club Theatre is offering Vancouver theatre audiences Moe this summer — that's Moe as in Five Guys Named Moe, the musical revue written by Clarke Peters, celebrating the music of showman and jazz saxophonist Louis Jordan.

"The thin story-line is based on a song made famous by Louis Jordan, written by Larry Wynn and Jerry Bressler," says veteran song-and-dance man Denis Simpson.

"There's No Moe, Four-Eyed Moe, Big Moe, Little Moe and Eat Moe and we all sing about, sing to, sing for, sing through a young man named Nomax."

"We're teaching this young man how to deal with women," adds Alvin Sanders.

"A lot of Louis Jordan songs dealt with male-female relationships. To string the songs together, Peters came up with this story where these older guys named Moe are teaching this younger guy about women and relationships."

"We teach him the range of love and emotion involved in a relationship in humorous and sometimes serious ways — mostly humorous."

The show, directed by Bill Miller with choreography by Dean Regan and musical direction by Bruce Kellett, is a revue in the style of *Ain't Misbehavin'*. Along with Simpson and Sanders, *Five Guys Named Moe* features Chanz Perry, Tom Pickett, Alexander (A-Train) Boynton and Mike Desire as Nomax.

"These are some new faces to the Arts Club audience," says Simpson. "A-Train has done film and television but is best-known as a bass player and vocalist; Mike's a

terrific singer with several recordings out." Both Sanders and Simpson are excited about the music in the show.

"The songs are entertaining and each one is a little vignette," says Simpson.

"Some of the songs are familiar — Is You Is Or Is You Ain't My Baby, Caldonia — people will have heard those names," adds Sanders.

"A lot of the other songs, people will recognize the music when they hear it. Louis Jordan is considered by the people who we consider started rock 'n' roll as the person who influenced them: Chuck Berry, Buddy Holly, Little Richard and especially Bill Haley.

"When Haley recorded *Rock Around the Clock*, Louis Jordan was the highest record-selling person on the label he was recording for, so he had a huge influence on everyone recording for that label."

"He had a lot of fun with his music and his band — the sort of things we are doing in the show aren't dissimilar to the way Louis Jordan presented the songs himself."

The show opened in London five years ago and was a huge hit there, before its 1992 Broadway success. Will it do as well here?

"It depends on how well we get the word out," says Sanders.

"Here at the Arts Club, we are producing a big-time Broadway musical with as much talent and production values as any of the big shows that come through town, like *Showboat* and *Miss Saigon*."

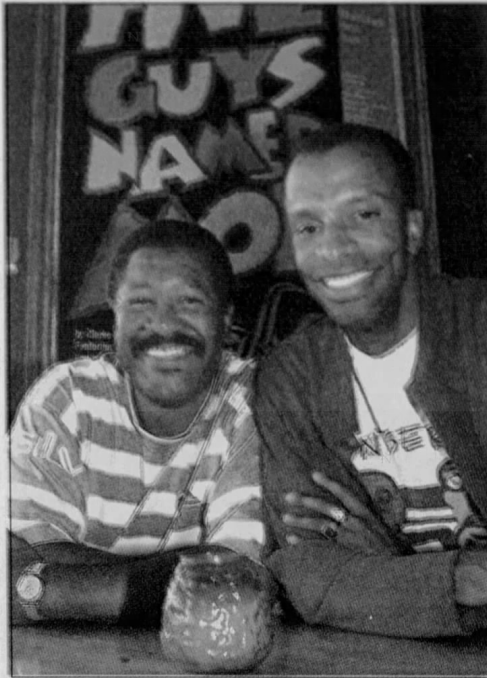
"We don't have the kind of money these people do to advertise — but we're producing things of the same quality. And we're cheaper!"

Five Guys Named Moe previews tonight and tomorrow and opens at the Arts Club Mainstage on Wednesday. Tuesday has been declared *Have Moe Fun Night* and the first 200 people who have "Mo" in their names, or come with a picture of a famous Moe, or dress up as one, get in free that evening.

Showtime is 8 p.m. Tickets: 687-1644.



RENEE DORUYTER On Stage



Alvin Sanders, left, and Denis Simpson star in new Arts Club production. Staff photo by Jon Murray

WATSON'S CHANGES SHOOK UP FANS

By Renee Doruyter
Jazz Columnist

His change to fusion wasn't to everyone's taste

The buzz at the Bobby Watson concert at Vancouver East Cultural Centre last weekend was one of surprise.

Between the time Coastal Jazz and Blues booked the date and the alto saxophonist's appearance here, he had a totally different band and musical direction.

What much of the audience expected was Watson's excellent neo-bop sound. What they got was Watson's brand new and grooving electric band playing fusion — playing it really well, mind you, but not entirely to everyone's taste.

The band consists of remarkably talented players: Greg Jones on bass, Mark Soskin on piano, Greg Skaff on guitar and, subbing for Victor Lewis, Harold Summey on drums. These names may not be familiar to you yet, but they are musicians to watch for.

There's lots of exciting music happening this weekend as well. If you haven't yet had the pleasure of hearing the Christine Duncan Trio — that's Duncan on vocals, with Bob Murphy on piano and Miles Hill on bass — Alma Street Cafe is the place to be this evening.

Duncan has a powerful, flexible, gospel-tinged voice. Murphy is a monumentally-talented pianist whose time has definitely come and Hill is a local (and national) favorite as well. They regularly bring the house down.

Tomorrow, Alma Street Cafe presents another excellent band, the George Robert Trio; Wednesday, saxophonist Campbell Ryga joins guitar wiz Oliver Gannon; Thursday, Bob Murphy plays solo piano works. Music from 8 p.m. weekends, 7:30

p.m. during the week.

Tomorrow appears to be tribute night: At the Glass Slipper, check out vocalist Kate Hammett-Vaughan and her trio in an unusual evening of music composed by Duke Ellington, Charles Mingus and Thelonious Monk.

The latter two composed material rarely performed by singers — you can bet that this will be an interesting evening. Doors at 9 p.m., music at 9:30 p.m. The Slipper is located at 2714 Prince Edward, right behind the Biltmore Hotel.

At Raffels Lounge (1221 Granville Street), the John Doheny Quintet is also paying tribute tomorrow evening. This one to the late tenor saxophonist Dexter Gordon. Raffels presents jazz Wednesday through Saturday, from 9:30 p.m.

Chris Sigerson has been playing solo jazz piano at Sortino's (1130 Commercial) for many years. As of last week, Sortino's has expanded the music policy to trios and quartets, featuring various local jazz, folk and blues artists, Thursday through Sunday from 8 p.m.

June Katz is doing her swinging thing with Linton Garner tonight and tomorrow at Rossini's; the George Blondheim Quartet is featured tomorrow afternoon from 3:30 to 6:30 p.m.

For those who like to dance as well as listen: Kenny Colman and the Stan (Cuddles) Johnson Trio are at Chardonnays tonight and tomorrow from 8:30 p.m.

And Al Wold's Swing Machine is at Hot Jazz (2120 Main) tonight from 9.