

# In Tune

Official Publication of Charlotte County Jazz Society, Inc.

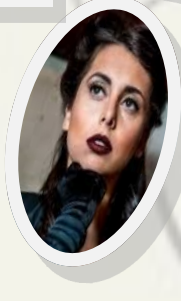
Volume 29, Issue 2

April 2018— September 2018

April  
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Tickets are available at the box office starting at 6:30 pm on concert night or in advance through the box office at 625-4175 X 221. Seating is on a first-come, first-served basis.

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### Veronica Swift's jazz DNA serves her well

The Charlotte County Jazz Society got to catch a rising star on Monday, February 12, and she made a mighty impression.



Swift

Fresh off a week-long series of performances aboard The Jazz Cruise out of Fort Lauderdale, singer Veronica Swift quickly showed she's the real deal in a concert with tenor saxophonist Jeff Rupert's very fine quartet. The band included pianist Richard Drexler, bassist Ben Kramer and Marty Morell, who was late pianist Bill Evans' longest-serving drummer. (Rupert, Drexler and Morell are on the University of Central Florida jazz faculty.)



RUPERT

Swift, the 23-year-old daughter of late bebop pianist Hod O'Brien and singer Stephanie Nakasian, has a swinging presence. It is backed by her abilities to explore a wide range of tunes, write and deliver vocalese (lyrics written to classic jazz solos), scat tastefully and emulate instrumental sounds that often make her one more horn player in the band.

She is making a rapid rise on the national jazz scene on the heels of her second-place performance in the 2015 Thelonious Monk Jazz Competition and her December 2016 graduation from the University of Miami's Frost School of Music. She's now based in New York City, gigs regularly in Manhattan and tours with trumpeter Chris Botti.



Swift, Kramer

On this evening, Swift and the quartet explored a half-dozen tunes from their 2017 CD, *Let's Sail Away*, plus a few other gems with their high-energy, bop-infused swing.

On "September in the Rain," Swift sang vocalese lyrics to a classic Lester Young solo and then emulated an upright voice with her voice, trading clever phrases with Kramer's bass lines. The band's take on "Pennies from Heaven" included Swift's own vocalese lyrics to a classic Stan Getz solo on the saxophonist's 1958 recording with the Oscar Peterson trio.



Morell



Drexler

Other gems included the band's takes on pianist Vince Guaraldi's "Ginza Samba," and the "Home Blues" middle section of George Gershwin's "An American in Paris." The latter tune's strong and bluesy feel revealed Swift's breadth and depth as a lyric interpreter. The band's two sets also included fresh material for this concert: Oscar Pettiford's "Battle Axe" and Sidney Bechet's "Promenade aux Champs-Élysées." On the latter, Swift emulated a trombone in her solo, complete with slide motions.

The band also dug into Rupert's "Let's Sail Away" and "Beauty Becomes Her" (the later with lyrics written by Swift), Johnny Mandel's hard-driving "Pernod," a Brazilian medley with Portuguese lyrics deftly delivered by Swift, and a sizzling closer, "Fine and Dandy."

This band fits Swift well in her Florida tours. Rupert loves to celebrate the beauty of the melody on his horn with a tone that often sounds like the late Stan Getz. Drexler is a tasty accompanist at the keyboard, adding solid and subtle touches as needed. Kramer and Morell provided a solid rhythmic cushion all night long.



Drexler, Swift, Rupert, Kramer, Morell

This concert drew a crowd estimated at 375 to the Cultural Center of Charlotte County's William H. Wakeman III Theater. It was the 2017-18 CCJS season's largest audience to date.

Reprinted with permission from writer-photographer Ken Franckling's Jazz

Honoring Buddy, Rosie and many more



David Pruyn

Buddy Rich and Rosemary Clooney were top of mind when trumpeter-singer David Pruyn brought his Jazz Legacy Big Band back to Port Charlotte on Monday, March 12. Both received multi-song tributes in this artful program. The evening also highlighted the music of other big-band leaders, composers and arrangers - some well known, some deserving of far more recognition.

Pruyn drafted an A-team of Florida jazz musicians for this Charlotte County Jazz Society concert, with drummer Eddie Metz Jr. powering the band. Area newcomer Roy Gerson, a nationally known jazz pianist who moved to Naples seven months ago, and bassist Charlie Silva completed the rhythm section. The leader's wife, the talented singer Michele James-Pruyn, spiced up the evening with a half-dozen tunes, five of them from the Clooney hit parade.

The Buddy Rich tribute was fitting, because hearing drummer Rich's road band live in 1969 as a kid drummer in his father's circus band whetted Pruyn's appetite



Eddie Metz Jr.

for big band jazz. The New Orleans native has spent time on a half-dozen of the big-name big-bands that have toured the country over the years. In addition to leading the band heard this night, he also is the new leader of the Jimmy Dorsey Orchestra.

The Rich-related portions of the concert included Buddy's traditional opening number, Sammy Nestico's "Ya Gotta Try," (which was Pruyn's opener this night); a big-band take on Antonio Carlos Jobim's "Wave," on which bass trombonist Chris Lundquist's solo floated over the reed section's flute chorus; another longtime Rich opener, "Mexicali Nose"; and a "West Side Story" medley that Rich had commissioned for his band. The latter spotlighted Metz and hornman Scott Melamerson, who had been Rich's lead trumpeter.



Michele James-Pruyn

The Clooney tribute included "Something's Gotta Give," the feverish "Mambo Italiano," "Hey There" from *The Pajama Game*, "Someone to Watch Over Me" and the frisky "In the Cool, Cool, Cool of the Evening." James-Pruyn also delivered a poignant take on the Luis Bonfá bossa nova "The Gentle Rain."



Danny Jordan



Roy Gerson

Other big band gems delivered this night included Bob Florence's melancholy composition "Autumn," Phil Kelly's arrangement of "Sweet Georgia Upside Down" (recorded by trombonist Bill Watrous and the Manhattan Wildlife Refuge), Oliver Nelson's "Baja Bossa," and Pruyn's take on Woody Herman's vocal hit, "Sonny Boy." He also sang on a Ron McConnell arrangement of the Mel Tormé hit "Liza," "Fools Rush In" and the Sergio Mendes hit "Like a Lover."

The program closed with Mike Barone's "Peachy," which was trumpeter Doc Severinsen's "Tonight Show" closing number when he fronted the band.

Tenor saxophonist Danny Jordan was a solo powerhouse, with spotlight moments on the Tom Kubis arrangement of "When You're Smiling," "Autumn" and "Mexicali Nose," among others. Alto saxophonists Peter BarenBregge and Valerie Gillespie were featured respectively on "Baja Bossa" and Patrick Williams' arrangement of the Ray Noble composition "I Hadn't Anyone 'Til You."

The concert drew an estimated 375 people to the Charlotte County Cultural Center's William H. Wakeman III Theater.



Jazz Legacy Big Band

Reprinted with permission from writer-photographer Ken Franckling's Jazz Notes blog.

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Our ***jazz jams*** will be on the last Sunday of each month at the **Kingsway Golf Course**, 13625 SW Kingsway Cir, Lake Suzy, FL 34269 from 1-4 pm. We're all about jazz. Come sit in or just sit and enjoy.

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**JAM DATES:**

**Mar 25, Apr 29, 2018**

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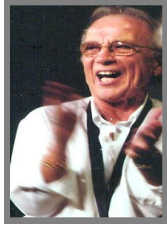
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Charlotte County Jazz Society is deeply grateful to former members Marjorie Jean Biermann, Helen Langdon, and Donatella and Ken Neumann. Their generous bequests now play a major role in helping fund the outstanding jazz artists brought to our community by CCJS. They have also been instrumental in supporting our commitment to pass on our love of jazz with the awarding of annual scholarships to graduating high school seniors. We invite you to join us in our mission to preserve, promote and present live jazz by including CCJS in your will, trust, retirement account or life insurance policy, or with a donation to CCJS in honor or memory of a fellow jazz lover. For more detailed information, please contact any CCJS officer or director as listed on the last page.



# Local Jazz Beat

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**In Tune** is published **four** times a year (Oct., Dec., Feb., and April). We welcome pertinent articles, letters and news items space permitting. Opinions expressed are those of the writers and not necessarily those of the CCJS.

Don't forget to take advantage of our CCJS email list. We try to send out reminders for events by email. Please send your name and email address to Connie at

[intunejazz@gmail.com](mailto:intunejazz@gmail.com)

Membership questions call Connie 941-235-9482



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All That's Jazz



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 Concert Season



- October 9**      **DOUBLE CONCERT**  
**DICK HAMILTON** Sextet /  
**MIKE MARKAVERICH** Trio
- November 13**    **JOHNNY VARRO** & his  
**SWING SEVEN**
- December 11**    **GREG ABATE** Saxophonist
- January 8**        **LATIN JAZZ NIGHT**  
**JOE DELANEY** & friends
- February 12**    **JEFF RUPERT** Quartet with  
**VERONICA SWIFT**
- March 12**        **BIG BAND JAZZ NIGHT**  
**DAVE PRUYN & THE JAZZ**  
**LEGACY BIG BAND**
- April 9**          **DIXIELAND JAZZ NIGHT**  
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