

Horace Silver's music pours out in golden performances

By Chris Smith

ConcertReview

The Music of Horace Silver

■ Derrick Gardner, Don Braden
■ Izzy Asper Jazz Performances
■ Sept. 18
★★★★ out of five

HORACE Silver is a many-sided musician and composer and nothing shows that quite like *Sister Sadie* and *Peace*, two showcase tunes performed Sunday afternoon.

Sister Sadie is a kick-ass party piece more in the recognized Silver mould and played with the requisite gusto, and funk, by tenor saxophonist Don Braden, trumpeter Derrick Gardner, pianist Peter Martin, bassist Steve Kirby and drummer Quincy Davis.

Peace is an almost delicate composition performed by pianist Martin and Braden playing flute in a clear crowd-pleaser during the first of two concerts

Sunday in the season-opener of the Izzy Asper Jazz Performances series.

If *Peace* was like an elegant etude, *Sister Sadie* conjures a raucous party-goer who likes to dance all night.

Gardner, the new Babs Asper trumpet professor in the University of Manitoba faculty of music's jazz studies department, kicked it off with a blistering

solo and the band kept it up through a string of solos that burned.

Guests Braden and Martin are wonderful players with the affinity for and chops to play Silver's music. With Gardner, who arrived in Winnipeg in August, and his faculty mates Kirby, director of jazz studies, and Davis they made a formidable band with the punch to do justice to classic Silver compositions such as *Nica's Dream*, *Song for My Father* and *Strollin'*.

Strollin' was a showcase for Martin, an excellent pianist, who turned in great solos and was a tasteful accompanist throughout the concert.

Braden is a terrific tenor player, and he surprised me, at least, with his flute playing. I confess to not being much as

fan of jazz flute, but Braden may have found a convert with his performances on *Peace* and on *Silver's Serenade*.

The concert included many well-known Silver tunes, but Gardner added an arrangement of a lesser-known piece, *Sweet Sweetie Dee* that gave room for the trumpeter and Braden to blow hard.

Silver, a co-founder of The Jazz Messengers with drummer Art Blakey, was known for funky, soulful compositions; the kind that make your feet move and that chase you onto the dance floor in a club. Songs like *The Jody Grind* that, along with *Sister Sadie*, gave the Berney Theatre audience a sense they were in just such a club.

Perhaps his best-known tune, *Song*

for My Father, never fails to catch an audience's attention with its infectious music. Like so many Silver tunes, you've probably heard it before, many times, and it sounds and feels good when you hear it again.

The only non-Silver composition played was Braden's *The Vale Jumpers*, which he described as a cousin to *Sister Sadie*. And it had the same punch and ability to garb an audience that Silver's best work does.

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The concert was dedicated to Babs Asper, who died in July. She and her late husband Izzy were longtime jazz fans and patrons who started the series.

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