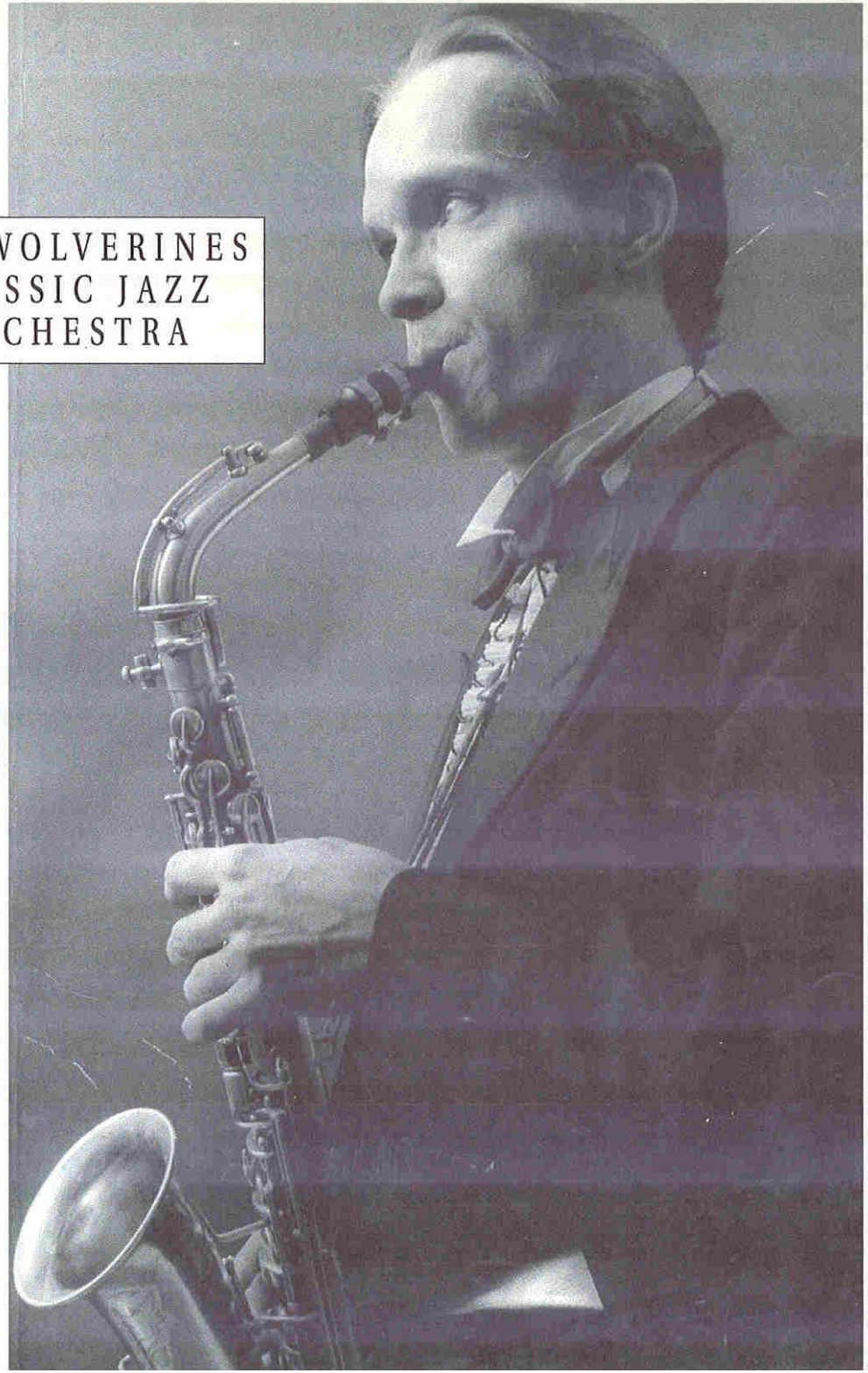
THE WOLVERINES CLASSIC JAZZ ORCHESTRA

Ted Unseth organized the Wolverines in the summer of 1973 from a combination of his musical friends and students that he taught through the Minneapolis Public Schools Urban Arts music composition program from 1970 to '73. The band was formed as a repertory group to perform transcriptions of 1920s music that Ted and others in the group painstakingly copied off the old scratchy recordings. None of the members were chosen for their playing ability alone. In fact, many picked up their instruments for the first time to play in the group. Rather, they were assembled for their interest in and their commitment to the project.

The first members were Joe Demko on guitar, Chuck Greve on electric bass, Ed Beatey on guitar, me (Dave Sletten) on sax, Tim Sullivan on trumpet, Johnny Olsen on violin, Ted Unseth on sax and piano and Becky Reimer on vocals. To understand the feel of the jazz age, each member was asked to read Mezz Mezzro's, "Really the Blues" as they joined the band.

Ted was the caretaker and third floor resident of the Crosby house, a mansion at 2105 First Avenue South that housed the Children's Theater Program and the Urban Arts offices.

This is where the rehearsals took place and ultimately where many of the band members would live.



The first engagement for the band was July 21,1973, a concert hosted by the West bank school of music at the Firehouse which later became the home of Mixed Blood Theater. At this job Ted opened up for the band by playing and singing which is a throw-back to his earlier musical life as a folk singer/songwriter. He also played piano on "One O'clock Jump," a duet with Joe Demko on bass. The poster lists The Wolverines- Genuine 1920s Jass (an old spelling for jazz) The next engagement for the band was in August, the fifth anniversary party and opening of the new location for the Electric Fetus, a record store and headshop. The band knew only four instrumentals: the "Wang Wang Blues," "Bozo," "Wabash Blues" and "Sweet Lelani" (with a band vocal) and two vocals featuring Becky: "Mississippi Mud" and "Misery Blues." We would play everything we knew, take a break while Dave Ray played, then repeat the same songs for our next set. At this job only, Michael Lockwa was used on second violin. We were paid in free keg beer, which took its toll on the band. In fact, I remember being so musically incapacitated that I experienced the age-old tradition of being pants (having my pants forcibly removed) by the other band members.

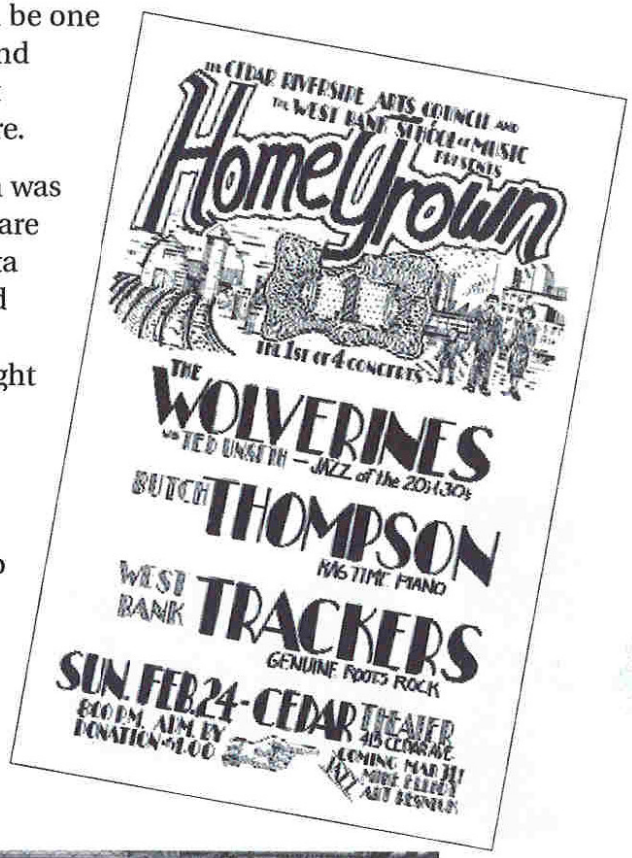
The band was growing during this period with Mark Bryn added on drums and Jack Laffe on trombone. Jack remembers his first job at the Riverside Café where Mark Bryn played drums and a Ukrainian stringed instrument called the bandura. Shortly thereafter Steve Benson was added on guitar, Brett Forberg was added on drums and Mark Bryn switched to piano. Brett remembers his first job as a rowdy campus homecoming gathering at Valley Pizza in Dinkytown.

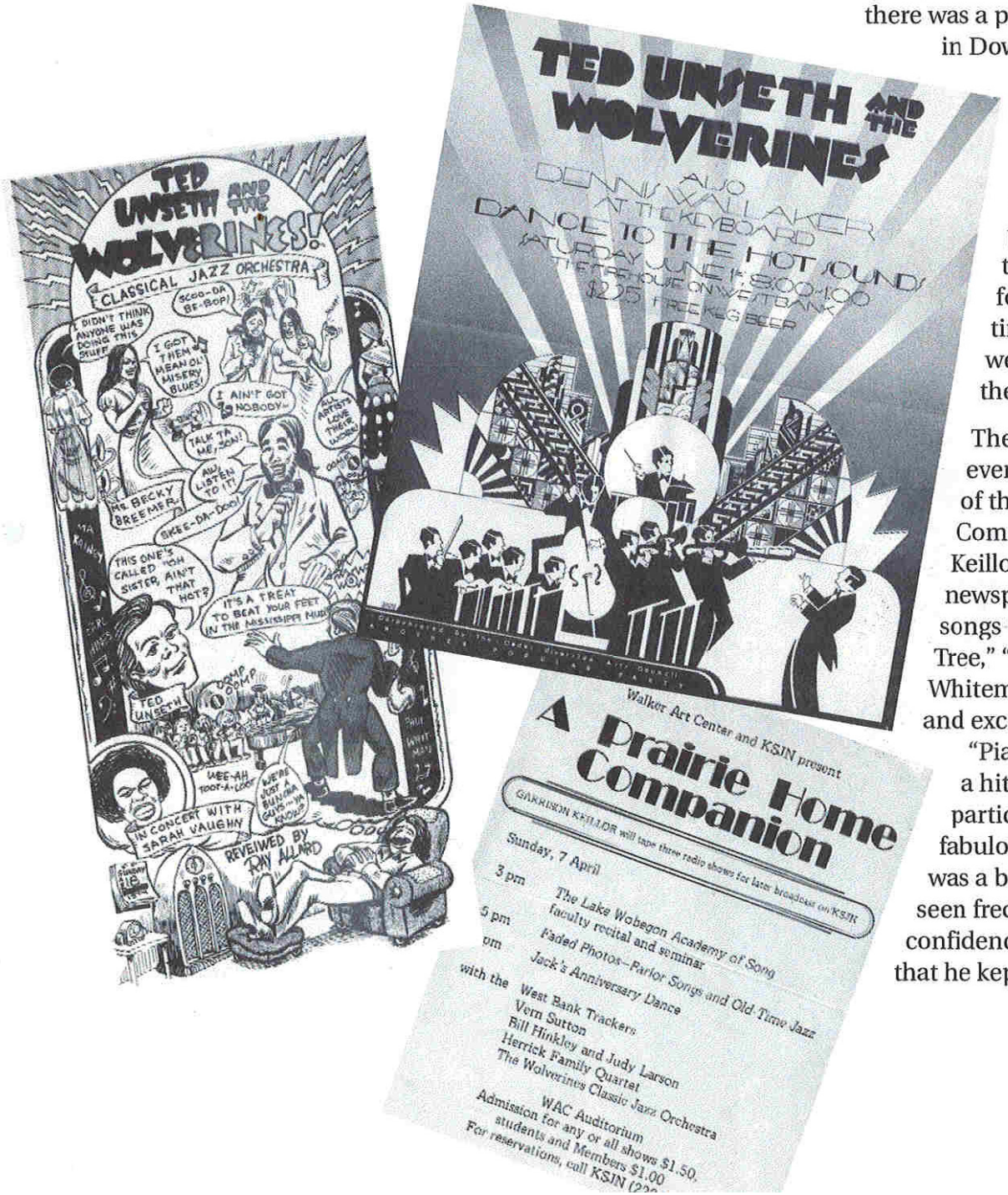
A highlight concert from this early period was at the Cedar Theater on February 24, 1974. It was sponsored by the Cedar Riverside Arts Council and the West Bank School of Music and included Butch Thompson playing ragtime piano, The West Bank Trackers and The Wolverines. Electric and acoustic guitars still played a lot of the horn lines and Chuck still played electric bass, giving the band an almost country swing sound.

Sometime after this concert the horn section was expanded with Scott Sueker on clarinet and sax, Mark Bruner on trumpet and Steve Sandberg on trombone. At this time Chuck switched to tuba from electric bass. This gave the band a more realistic 1920s sound.

Around this time the first publicity pictures in tuxedos were taken. Sandberg and Bruner were in the band but late for the photo shoot and most people didn't have their instruments so we divided what we had between those in attendance giving a false impression of what people played. The tuxedos, which became somewhat of a trademark, were donated by widows of deceased Apollo Club members after dogged solicitation by my mother, Olga Sletten. This completed the odd and eccentric visual presentation of the already unusual band playing 1920s music and could very well be one of the reasons why the band would develop such a cult following in the near future.

An early recording session was scheduled at the Park Square Court studios of Minnesota Public Radio and the band needed to bring its own piano. So we took an upright that belonged to the Children's Theater (there's some confusion as to whether or not we asked permission), loaded it into Steve Sandberg's old International pickup and





transported it to St. Paul. Unfortunately there was a problem with centrifugal force in Downtown St. Paul and on a turn the piano took a bad spill out of the truck. This meant a good deal of time was spent with Mark Bryn re-assembling and tuning the piano when we arrived. To kill time the rest of the band went for liquid refreshments. By the time the sessions began we were in no better shape than the piano.

The next important concert event that spring was the taping of the first three Prairie Home Companion shows with Garrison Keillor on Sunday, April 7. A newspaper article mentioned the songs "Shaking Like a Leaf on a Tree," "Misery Blues," "The Whiteman Stomp," "Off to Buffalo" and excerpts from Aaron Copland's "Piano Concerto." The band was a hit and we got a chance to participate in the genesis of a fabulous radio institution. Garrison was a bit nervous back stage and was seen frequently building his confidence with a bottle of M.D. 20/20 that he kept in his briefcase.

The Children's Theater Company moved from the Crosby House into their new facilities attached to the Art Institute in 1974 and the band played the grand opening and a few parties in that first year. Brett Forberg remembers having to watch out for a particular drunk in a cowboy hat, that at each and every engagement would dance to the band until dizzy and invariably stumble and fall into the drum set.

Ted related a story of how an adult actor for the company, Wendy Lerher, found not only the music interesting but also liked the visual presentation. "I consider the band as theater. I walk around the side and somebody's fumbling around with something down here, guys are telling jokes back here. Your band is wonderful to watch in a theatrical sense. You've got a weird bunch of people here, bro."

Thom Sandberg, an artist friend of the band, created the Wolverines logo for a poster promoting a job at the Firehouse on June 1,. Thom remembers that he and some friends had the idea of renting the firehouse after hearing the band at the Cedar Theater. They asked Ted about hiring the band and Ted said that he would

need $10.00 per musician. They charged $2.25 to get in and there was free keg beer. A good time was had by all and the promoters made a profit.

Sometime in the spring or early summer of '74, Ed Beaty became the first original member to leave the group.

Right before the album was recorded there was another milestone live engagement. On August 18 the band opened for Sarah Vaughn at the Guthrie Theater with guest artist Bob Rockwell on clarinet. Bob would also be included on the upcoming recording sessions for the album. Steve Benson remembers Bob's reluctance to wear a tux since his last experience with one was at Richard Nixon's Inaugural. (And we all know how that turned out!) A compromise was worked out where Bob would wear a purple crushed velvet coat and we wore tuxes.

Doug Ackerman and Tom Brundage were the producers of that first album. Their enthusiasm, hard work, connections and follow through made the recording experience and outcome interesting and successful. The original 2,000 sold out. It was re-pressed and received four stars (a very good review) in *Downbeat Magazine*. Its airplay on WCCO AM radio did wonders for the band's exposure.

The original sessions were recorded at Sweet Jane Ltd. outside of Little Falls (Cushing MN). The studio was financed by Bonnie Rait's mother, Sweet Jane, and was run by Dave "Snaker" Ray and Steve Rait (Bonnie's brother). The Wolverines virtually moved in for a week that summer and the consumption of Lienenkugle beer was notorious. Becky remembers the count at 12 cases.

Doug Ackerman became famous for his contribution to the beer consumption.

The band would not let him forget the time that no one could find him to OK a take until someone opened the soundproof double doors to the control booth and found him passed out inbetween them. He must have tried to inconspicuously enter the booth and succumbed to the Leinenkugle before he could open the inner door.

There was a problem with the phase on the vocal mikes at these sessions which was discovered when the mastering began and this led to another set of sessions in late fall in the basement of a church on East Franklin Avenue that the Augsburg band used for rehearsals.

During the winter, Becky Riemer quit the band because of increasing musical demands and would soon form the Sky Blue Water Boys. This band performed regularly on the Prairie Home Companion show for many years. She remembers her last gig with the band at an AA convention at the Prom Ballroom. "There were all these people when we started and by the end of the first set there were only 20 people left. It was a weeknight and they had to work the next morning. But the waiters and waitresses were dancing with each other, some of the horn players were dancing and the janitor was dancing with a broom. I figured it was a fitting send off."

There was a duo of women that sang with the Wolverines for a couple of engagements. The band called them Beth and The Hand. (The nickname of The Hand arose because of a mannerism that was evident when she sang.) They sang together because they were too shy to sing alone and Chuck Greve remembers that one sang sharp and the other flat.

As a picture in the *Minneapolis Tribune* in January '75 demonstrates, we then had a singer named Betty "Boop" Brenner for a few engagements but Ted remembers her quitting mid engagement after we started "Mississippi Mud" without her because she couldn't be found following a break.

At some point over that winter, the band members that lived together on the third floor of the Crosby house had to vacate. The band rehearsed for a while in my mother's basement at 4333 Beard Avenue South. Ted and Mark Bryn eventually moved into an apartment over Big John's Barbecue at Seven Corners on 14th Avenue South and Washington Avenue. The band would later rehearse in the vacant storage room above Big John's.

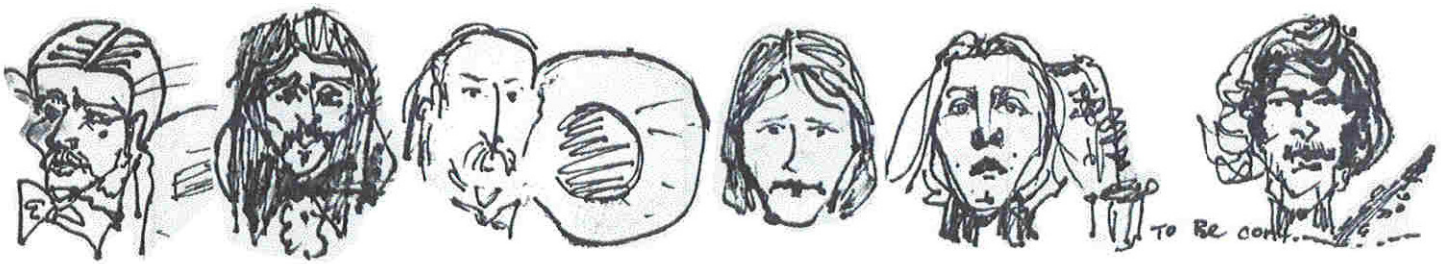
Around this time Scott Sueker left the band and Kevin Frawley was worked in along with the new vocalist, Joanie Gudmestadt. They are both evident in the personnel listings for the next big concert for the

Members of the Wolverines Classic Jazz Orchestra are among the hundreds of artists and performers who will participate in "Our Heritage of the Arts," a city-wide showcase of the arts which will take place this weekend at dozens of locations in and near Downtown. See story at right.

band at O'Shaughnessy Theater on April 6, 1975.

In July of that year, regular Sunday night engagements began at the Longhorn Bar. This gave people a regular location to find the band and did a lot to build the cult that, in those days, followed the band from job to job. However, the band played for the door so each player took home no more than $10 or $15 per night.

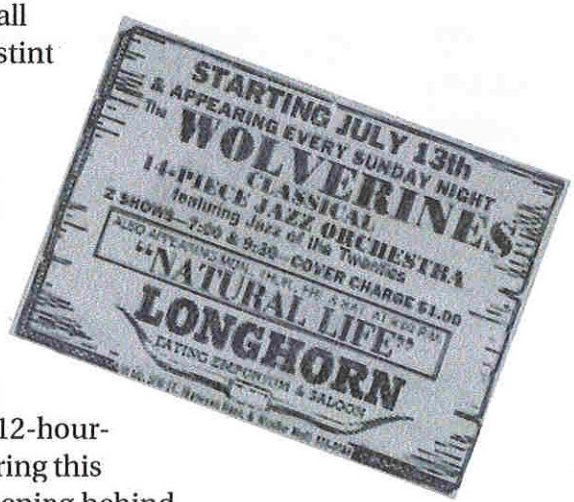
The Wolverines were playing so many out of town jobs that transportation became a problem. We had been traveling in a hodge podge caravan of old undependable personal vehicles that, on more than one occasion, broke down and caused problems on road trips. This led to the purchase of an old school bus as transportation for engagements. Joe Demko's dad had a connection and we bought and old green and white GMC with a racecar engine for $800.00. The interior was fitted with bunks, an assortment of ratty old chairs and a few of the original bench seats. The mechanical condition of the bus was always precarious and there are many reminiscences of the whole band getting out to push start it. There was also an experience in Iowa in 1977 where the brakes went out on a hill while Brett Forberg was driving, and if it were not for some stunt driving and super

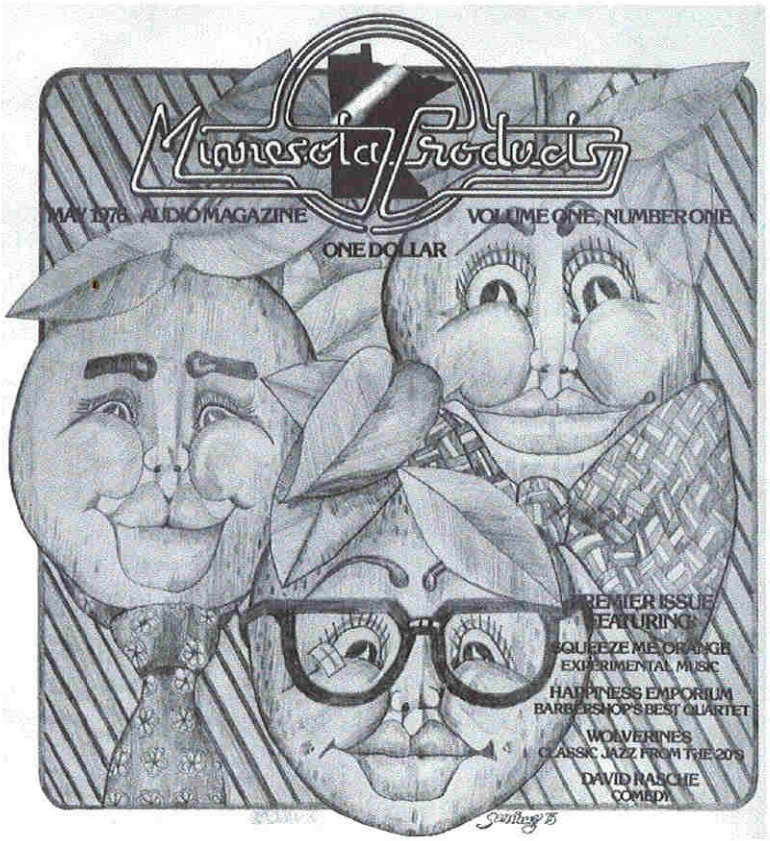


human emergency brake work by Joe Demko this could have been the last chapter of the band.

On the Fourth of July, 1975, the band was loaded on a barge at the U of M Mississippi River landing and spent the day playing at numerous stops as the barge moved down the river to Harriet Island in St. Paul. The band remembers the excitement of playing Cab Calloway's "Bugle Call Rag" while the water level sank in Lock and Dam #1 just south of Minneapolis. The memories of old jazz music on the river including Jellyroll Morton, Louis Armstrong and Fate Marible's bands playing in this area, led to a magical sense of history that day. Unfortunately for me I didn't wear a hat in this pre-sunscreen time and when we played at the Cabooze that night the blisters on my face had already appeared.

1975, in some band members opinion, was the hey day of the band. The number of gigs increased throughout the spring and summer and by fall there was a six night a week stint at the Ramada Inn for the months of September and October. With the Longhorn on Sundays this added up to 21 straight days of playing. This period really tightened up the band but had it's negative effects on poor Chuck Greve in particular. Because of his 12-hour-a-day job that he worked during this period he could be found sleeping behind the bandstand on most breaks.





This period is under-represented by recordings with the exception of a unique floppy record that included "Roughhouse Blues," "Squeeze Me," "Charleston is the Best Dance After All" and interview excerpts from Joe Demko and Ted Unseth. The project was called Minnesota Products, Volume One, Number One, an Audio Magazine, and also included a Barbershop quartet, a comic and experimental music by a group that included Chan Poling. Thom Sandberg, the artist, was involved as was Carl Frazen who would later become Ted's landlord. This product was released the following year in May of '76.

To put this artistically productive period in perspective, I have an accounting of the income from 1975 that shows that we made less than $4,000 each that year.

In February '76 Kevin Frawley had a serious health problem and in the six+ months that he was gone, the band would have a number of good clarinet players (ringers) filling in including Bill Gervasio, Eddie Berger and Harry Peterson.

In the winter of '75-'76 I made contact with a 1920s trumpet virtuoso, Jabbo Smith, who was living in obscurity in Milwaukee and working for Avis car rental.

My wife Cathy and I went to visit him on the train, taped an interview with him and suggested having him join the Wolverines for an engagement in Minneapolis. Upon

my return to Minneapolis I contacted the Hall Brothers, who played trad jazz and owned a night cub in Mendota. An engagement was arranged and it was agreed that Jabbo would play two nights with the Hall Brother's band and one with the Wolverines. This took place on May 7 - 9, 1976 and was the last job for Chuck Greve.

Pat Schmid replaced Chuck on bass and tuba and remained with the band until its demise in 1979.

Spring and summer '76 brought more steady engagements at the Historic Commodore Hotel where F. Scott Fitzgerald lived in the 1920s, and later at Scotties on Seventh, the renovated art deco Forum Cafeteria.

A highpoint at Scotties was the night Benny Goodman came to hear the band. I got Benny's autograph on my part to Bernstein's "Prelude, Fugue and Riffs," which was dedicated to Goodman. This contact led to a job with Goodman for Joannie Gudmestad the band's vocalist in January '77. Scotties continued through 1976 and with other local engagements and college tours the band was busier than ever.

Of course the Bicentennial was July 4, 1976 and the band loaded up the bus and went to Chicago to play at Ratso's, a jazz club in Oldtown from June 28 through July 4. Opening for us was a duo named Blegan & Sayer whose later album "Classical Cartoon Music" (Aardvark Records '76) would include three Wolves: Brett, Pat

Schmid and me. They were very funny and added to the carnival atmosphere of the trip. Also, WCCO-TV had sent a camera crew along with us. They wanted to catch the whole experience for a documentary segment. At times they were on the bus, or filming the bus go by. Then they added performance footage and interviews and ran it later that summer. The story was a good representation of how off-the-wall the band was and how much fun we had on that trip. I remember an image of Harry Peterson on the bus talking into the bell of his clarinet like an old telephone receiver.

There were two highlight performances in the fall of 1976. The first was Orchestra Hall on September 24 for a broadcast benefit. Dave Jensen was added on trumpet and Harry Peterson on reeds. (A selection from this live broadcast tape "Prelude, Fugue and Riffs" by Bernstein was included on the second album "Play That Thing.") And the band fondly remembers opening for Manhattan Transfer at O'Shaughassy Auditorium on October 24.They really liked the band and David Rogers tried to arrange for a tour with them, but it never materialized.

In November of '76 I left the band to join the Freddy Powers Show playing Dixieland in the casinos of Nevada. I was replaced by Steve Benson who moved from banjo and guitar to sax and clarinet.

1977 started with a bang when the band was invited to play on January 20 at Jimmy Carter's Inaugural Ball in Washington D.C. While on that trip they also played at the base of the Empire State Building in New York and at Mickey Roony's club in Pennsylvania.

When the band returned to Minneapolis they found that they had lost all but one night a week at Scotties on Seventh and other work was hard to come by. Under these financial and morale pressures there was a group of players that decided to leave: Mark Bryn, Joe Demko, Steve Sandberg and Joannie Gudmestad. They were replaced by John Boblett on trombone, Jim Tordoff on banjo, Gary Gimmenstadt on piano, (Johnny Olson the violinist was an interim piano player during this period) and Shelly Peterson (Harry's wife) on vocals.

The Band landed another steady engagement at the Commodore Hotel in the spring of '77.

For the Commodore job Jabbo Smith was again brought in and was in residence for two weeks living in the hotel and playing with the band. He played great but had a few bouts with alcohol. The problem surfaced the night a New Orleans priest Father Coco sat in on clarinet.

Jabbo tried to sing the Lord's Prayer but instead gave an extended incoherent speech on his life. Luckily, Jabbo was taken under the wing of Loraine Gordon, wife of the Village Gate owner, Max Gordon. She got him into the Broadway show "One Mo' Time." And he played with the Preservation Hall group before he died in the 1980s.

Around this time Jack Laffe left the band and was replaced by Pete Masters. The new group is pictured in an article about the Commodore Hotel engagement.

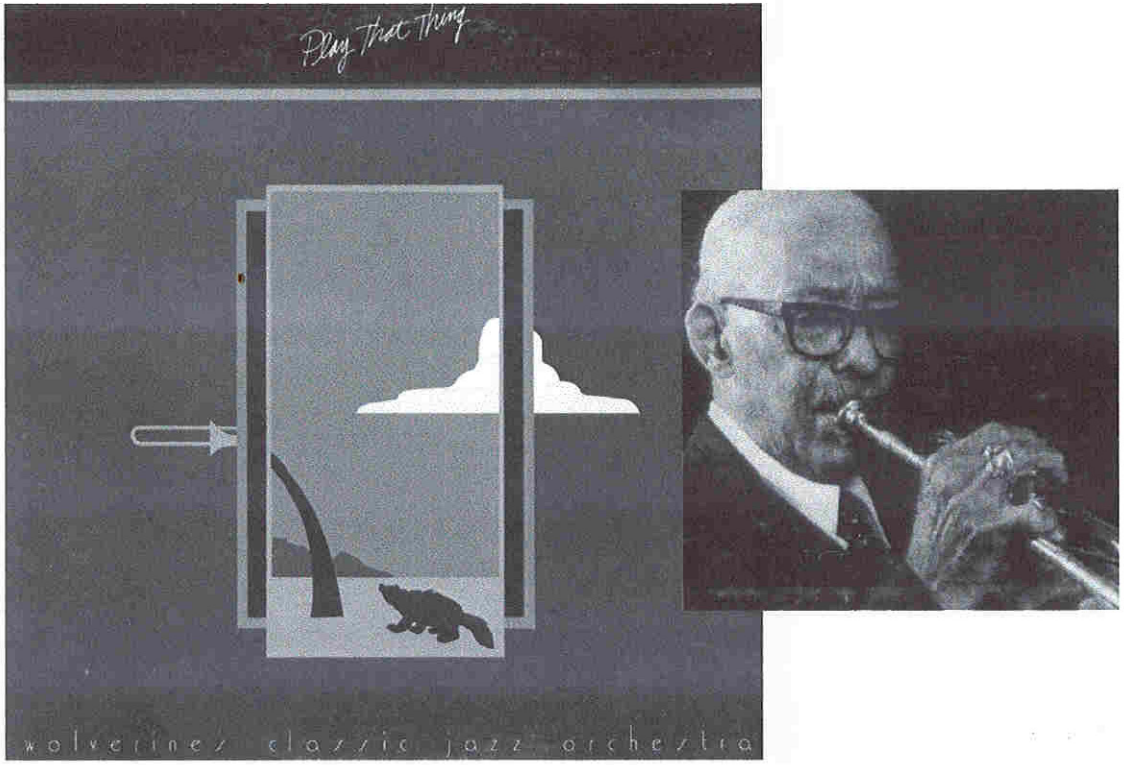
Another venue for the band surfaced that summer with a perfect connection to the Jazz age. The Castle Royale (215 South Wabasha) was carved out of the mushroom caves across the Wabasha

Street Bridge from St. Paul. It was a home to the underworld nightlife in the '20s and '30s and was said to be haunted by the ghosts of slain mobsters.

In the summer of 1977 the band played at the Meadowbrook Music Festival near Detroit along with Lionel Hampton and Marion McPartland. Lionel Hampton had sent along an up-tempo arrangement of "Lover" for the band to play with him. The band had very little time to prepare; they were less than perfect sight-readers to begin with, were uncomfortable soloing on standard jazz tunes and had a total misconception of the tempo. Besides that it went well. The band had a chance to meet some real jazz legends on this trip including George Duvivier and Grady Tate, who after a good swig from his flask offered this advice. "Don't go to New York. New York eats young souls like you."

In the fall of '77 the band toured to Chicago, St. Louis, Georgia and South Carolina.

In April of '78 they performed at the New Orleans Jazz and Heritage Festival, performing concerts on the way down and back.



Around this time Joyce Marie replaced Shelly Peterson as vocalist.

Fall '78 brought a West Coast tour that included a job at the Sahara Hotel in Las Vegas and on the Queen Mary in Longbeach California. Mark Bruner was in charge of the payroll at this point and when he and Jim Tordoff returned to their room in Las Vegas they found a burglar going through the drawers. As a born again Christian, Mark forgave him, asked him to repent and let him go.

The Wolverines second album was released in the fall of '78. It was produced by the band and was called "Play That Thing." It included Minneapolis trumpet legend "Rook" Ganz. Rook started hanging around the band when Jabbo Smith was in town at the Commodore Hotel because he knew Jabbo from years past.

While away on tour the band got word of a terrible car accident involving David

Rogers who was the band's manager. He took a short break from his work on an upcoming college tour to go for lunch and was very nearly killed only blocks from his home on 29th and Bloomington.

Brett Forberg and Steve Benson left the band in the winter of '79 although they would return periodically for certain engagements.

The band continued to play engagements including some weekends at the St. Paul Hotel but on October 17, 1979, the farewell concert was given at the Prom Center Ballroom with Rio Nido. The adventurous and experimental group went out as it came in with a version of Morton Gould's "Derivations for Solo Clarinet and Jazz Ensemble" with the solo clarinet part played on synthesizer by guest Mark Bryn, reportedly because woodwind sub, Bob Crea, didn't have the time to work it up. Ed Berger, who was also subbing on the band, and Crea did get a chance to shine in a sax battle that brought the house down.

Ted explained that there actually was one more engagement for the band at the St. Paul Hotel and in the audience was jazz historian Gunther Schuler, who would shortly have his own early jazz repertory group the New England Conservatory Ragtime Ensemble.

The Wolverines Classic Jazz Orchestra was really a grand experiment. Looking back, one would have to credit Ted Unseth as an idealistic leader and motivator for the project who accomplished the most when

he had young unorthodox players that were willing to listen learn and copy the old musical styles without giving thought to financial concerns.

Education of the players to the early jazz style and the study of their instruments was the basis of the project in the beginning, and it supplied all the artistic fulfillment needed at that early stage.

Ultimately, some of us found the note-for-note playing of such a narrow period restricting, and the increasing financial pressures as we got older and other opportunities led to a one by one exodus over the six-and-a-half-year first phase. Also a single event, the tragic car accident of the band's manager David Louis Rogers at a critical time in the band's momentum, seemed to signal the end of the hey day. Ted was the inspiration and artistic icon for the band, but was no businessman and he wisely turned over the business end to David Rogers. Much of the bands commercial success is due to Rogers' efforts and the band never found a suitable replacement.

We all agree that it was a great learning experience to copy the early jazz greats. And you can't beat the excitement during the early days with the ratty tuxedos and tennis shoes and the band playing eccentric music to the utter adulation of hippie and young upscale crowds. The band also created more of a media buzz than most other jazz bands in the history of the Twin Cities scene. But was it jazz? Is improvisation critical to the definition of the word jazz? Even as a repertory group it was a bit ragged around the edges — like the old tuxedos worn by the band. You could even argue that the mismatched and inappropriate shoes in the early pictures were an analogy for the way the group fit into the jazz world. And when the performances are critically analyzed, many musical flaws are apparent. But I think that this critical analysis misses the point of the band. Ted took a group of highly interested yet novice musicians on a truly bizarre quest to reproduce 1920s jazz recordings (with a few eclectic additions) and created a unique social phenomenon known as the Wolverines Classic Jazz Orchestra.

So ended the first phase of the Wolverines. The next phase, which continues to this day, was born in 1980 with the financial rescue and eventual takeover of the band by the Forberg family, Brett and his folks Jim and Mary. Many fine swing recordings and years of successful performances have followed.

Engagements

1973

July 21, Firehouse engagement for West Bank School of Music
The Electric Fetus grand opening sometime in August
September 22, Riverside Café (Jack's first job and Mark Bryn played Bandura)
Valley Pizza in Dinkytown for Uof M homecoming (Bretts first job)

1974

February 24, The Cedar Theater
MPR Studios
April 7, The first Prairie Home Companion at the Walker Art Center
May 18, Firehouse Theater benefit for the Palace Theater
May 24, and 25 The Whole Coffehouse
May 31,College of Art and Design Dance
June 1, The Firehouse
July 22, Walker Art Center
? Marquette Inn
August 18, Opening act for Sarah Vaughan at the Guthrie
August 29, First album recorded for a week at Sweet Jane Ltd.
October 31, Halloween party for College of Art and Design students at mansion behind the Crosby house.
Winter 74-75 Re-record vocal tracks at Augsburg band bldg. (Church where Augsburg band rehearsed)
Becky leaves group sometime in late fall or winter

1975

Gibbon Ballroom (They hated us because they expected teen king and the princes.)
January, Scott Sueker leaves group after job at the Cabooze
January 17, and 18, Whole coffeehouse
January 24, St. Thomas
January 27,Whole Coffeehouse
February 14, and 15, Cabooze
February 23, Waconia Ballroom
March 7, St. Mary's in Winona
March 8, Northwestern college of Chiropractic
April 6, O'Shaughnessy Theater (Kevin Frawleys and Joanie Gudmestadts first job)
April 11, NEC showcase
April 12, Gustavus Adolphus (I took off with Jacks car keys)
April 19, Luther College in Decora Iowa
April 25, Hotel Sofitel
Apr. 26th Hamline College
May 2, Carlton College
May 3, College of Art and Design
May 7, St. Cloud State University
May 8, Moorhead State University
May 16, Metro Jr. College
May 17, Private party
May 24, Shattuck Military academy
June 13, Firehouse
June 20, West Bank School of music (eclectic music not all wolves tunes)
June 22,Spring Hill Conference Center
July 3,American National Bank in St. Paul

July 4th Performed on a barge floating down the Mississippi during the day, the Cabooze that night plus the 5, and 6
July 13, Steady engagement at the Longhorn Bar every Sunday Night begins
July 14, Duluth and Superior
July 15, Northrop Plaza
July 18, Ridgedale shopping center
August 9, Lake Harriet band shell
August 10, Anoka county fair
August 11,and 12, On roof of Amalgamated restaurant w/ Chad Mitchell
August 20, One night stand at Ratsos in Chicago
August 22, Elgin Ill.
September 6, Milwaukee
September 22, through October11, Three weeks of six nights a week at the Ramada Inn on France & 494
October 16, Minnesota Educators Association convention
October 25, Osh Kosh Wisconsin
October 26, Marquette University in Milwaukee
October 29, Minneapolis Art Institute
November 8, University of Minnesota Morris (they loved us)
December 7, Sound of music party
December 27, through the 30, Telemark ski resort
December 31,Cabooze

1976

January 11, Last longhorn until March
January 16, and 17, Whole Coffeehouse
January 19, Showcase for county fairs
January 25, Jazz Emporium
January 29, St. Cloud State University
January 31, Kenosha Wisconsin
February 6, Bemidji
February 21, Hamline College
February 28, Art Institute
February 29, Eau Clare Wisconsin
March 12,13,14, Longhorn Bar
March 18, Macalester College
March 26, University of North Dakota
March 28, Last Longhorn
April 3, River Serpent
May 1, Prom at the St. Paul Hotel
May 1, and 2, Eden Prairie Shopping Center
May 6, Commodore Hotel every Thur., Fri., Sat.until Scotties starts
May 9, Hall Brothers Emporium of Jazz with Jabbo Smith (Chuck Greve's last job)
May 13, Mankato State College
May 15, College of Art and Design
May 30, River Serpent Billed as all summer on Sundays but we only did a couple (30th, 6th)
June 20, Institute of Arts Mall
June 17, Scotties on Seventh opening. Wolverines listed as playing wed. -Sat 9pm-1am but later in the summer an itinerary shows only Thurs.-Sat. This continues until the end of the year when it went down to 1 night.
June 20, Art Institute
June 26, Wedding in Wayzata
June 28 through July 4th Ratso's in Chicago w/ Blegan and Sayer

July 9, Government Center for Heritage of the Arts festival during the day and a wedding at night
July 10, and 11, North Shore jobs for Maw Brothers
July 16, Lake Harriet Bandstand
July 22, University of Wisconsin Superior
July 25, The Amalgamated restaurant
July 26, Northrup Plaza
August 6, The Gatehouse Speakeasy in Eagan
August 15, Anoka-Ramsey Community College
September 1, through the 6, State Fair performance at the band shell
September 10, Anniversary of Southdale
September 12, Butler Square Atrium
September 18, The Bicentennial Ball at Southdale
September 24, Orchestra Hall benefit for Loring-Nicollet
September 25, Luther College
September 26,University of Minnesota welcome week
October 3, Eden Prairie Center
October 5, Culver Indiana
October 6, Carthage College in Wisconsin
October 8, University of Nebraska in Lincoln
October 9, Grinnell Iowa
October 16, Coe college in Iowa
October 24, Opened for the Manhattan Transfer at O'shaughnessy Auditorium
December 1, University of North Dakota

1977

January 19, Joanie Gudmestad sings with Benny Goodman in Little Rock Ark.
January 20, Inaugural ball at the Shoreham America Hotel Washington D.C.
January 21 and 22, Downington Inn, Downington PA
January 23, The Riverboat at the base of the Empire State Bldg.
Winter '77: A group of players leaves the band. Steve Sandberg, Mark Bryn, Joe Demko, and Joannie Gudmestad.
February 18, Raddison
February 20, Hooligans
February 24, Gustavus Adolphus College
February 26, Hamline College
March 11, and 12, Trade show
March 17, Commodore
March 19, KQ broadcast at sound 80
March 20, Haymarket and/ or Hooligans
March 31, Radison St. Paul
April 2, Last engagement at Scotties on Seventh
April 3, South Dakota State at Brookings
April 15, Simsom College (they were late because bus broke down)
April 23, Stout State in Menomonee Wisconsin
June and July: Fridays and Saturdays at the Commodore Hotel Speakeasy, Shelly Peterson is now the vocalist, Pete Masters, and John Bobblet on trombones Jim Tordoff on Banjo and Gary Gimmestad on piano. Jabbo Smith is back for a couple of months.
Castle Royale steady job begins

June 29, Northrup Auditorium with the Ozone dance troupe. (Jack Laffe's last job)
July 2, 3, and 4, Valley Fair
August: Meadow Brook Music Festival near Detroit with Lionel Hampton and Marian McPartland
Minnesota State Fair
Fall '77: Tour to Chicago, St. Louis, Georgia, and South Carolina.

1978

April '78: New Orleans Jazz and Heritage Festival
September 25, The Sahara Hotel in Las Vegas
September 26, NWC Theater in Ridgecrest CA
September 27,28, Variety Arts Center Theater in Los Angeles
September 29, Whittier College at noon and the Queen Mary at night (The band heard about David Rogers accident while on tour)
Fall '78: New Orleans NECAA convention for college bookers
October 7, Orchestra Hall for Loring-Nicollet benefit
October: Second Album released
December 22, and 23, St. Paul Hotel
December 31, New years eve at the Hotel St. Paul

1979

January 5, Governor Quie's Inaugural Ball at the St. Paul Civic Center
Fridays, Saturdays, and Sundays at the Hotel St. Paul in Jan.
August 15, Uncle Sam's
October 17, Prom Ballroom: final show w/ Rio Nido
Last job is at Hotel St. Paul. (Gunther Schuler was there.)

The following set list has all the early material that I can remember besides Sweet Lelani, a medley which we must have dropped sometime before the first album, the Perry Mason theme which we played as a set closer on live engagements and Wild Man Blues("Jelly Roll" Morton; 1927) and Honeysuckle Rose (Django Reinhardt; 1935) which appeared on an early set list.

Set List from O'Shaghnessy Apr. 6th, 1975

1. Bugle call rag-Cab Calloway orch.;1931
2. Wang wang blues-Paul Whiteman orch.;1920
3. San-Paul Whiteman orch.;1928
4. Wringin' and a twistin' blues-Ma Rainey;1927
5. Whiteman stomp-Paul Whiteman orch.;1927
6. New down home blues –Clarence Williams orch.;1927
7. Hop off- Fletcher Henderson orch.;1927
8. Hungry blues-James P. Johnson;1939
9. Oh sister! Ain't that hot?- Jimmy Noone's apex club orch.;1928
10. Charleston is the best dance after all- Jabbo Smith/Charlie Johnson's paradise 10; 1927
11. Swing 41- Django Reinhardt; 1940
12. Undecided- Django Reinhardt; 1938
13. Concerto for piano and orchestra (excerpts)- Aaron Copland;1926

Intermission

1.Trickeration-Cab Calloway orch.; 1930
2. Shootin' the pistol-Clarence Williams orch.; 1928
3.Cincinnati daddy- Duke Ellingtons jungle band; 1929

4. I ain't got nobody- Coon Sanders' Nighthawks; 1927
5. Bozo- Clarence Williams orch.; 1928
6. Swamp Blues- Fletcher Henderson orch. 1927
7. Longshoremans blues- Clarence Williams orch. 1928
8. Misery blues- Ma Rainey and her Georgia band; 1927
9. I'm Gonna take my bimbo back to the bamboo isle- Clarence Williams orch.; 1928
10. Congaine- Earl Hines/Lois Deppe's serenaders; 1928
11. Squeeze me- Clarence Williams's orch. 1928
12. Mississippi Mud- Paul Whiteman orch.; 1928
14. Off to Buffalo- Fletcher Henderson orch.; 1927

The Emporium of jazz concert with Jabbo has these 2 additional tunes

Lina Blues- Jabbo Smith
Minor Drag- Fat's Waller

The Orchestra hall concert in the fall of '76 has these additional tunes

Anytime, Anyday, Anywhere- Paul Whiteman; 1920
Speakeasy blues- Clarence Williams, 1927
Apex blues- Jimmy Noone, 1928
Why couldn't be poor little me- Fletcher Henderson, 1925
Tozo- Fletcher Henderson orch.
There ain't no sweet man- Paul Whiteman, 1927
Here comes my ball and chain- Coon-Sanders Nighthawk's, 1928
Song of India- Rimsky- Korsakov/Paul Whiteman 1926
Roughhouse blues- Fletcher Henderson, 1927
You ain't the one- Charlie Johnson 1927
I cover the waterfront- Billie Holliday/ Teddy Wilson, 1941
Hungry Blues- James P. Johnson 1939
Rhythm in Spain- Jabbo Smith 1938
Fugue and riffs- Leonard Bernstein, 1949
Some of these days- Cab Calloway, 1931
Dippermouth Blues- Fletcher Henderson, 1931

At Orchestra Hall in '78 these new tunes appeared

Body and soul a combination of Coleman Hawkins solo, Benny Carter's sax section arrangement and the vocal by Prudence Johnson.
Hop Off a new arrangement by Don Redman
Chant of the Weed
Mood Indigo Duke Ellington
Ooh what a Little Moonlight can do. Billy Holiday
Saratoga Shout Louis Russell
Do nothing till you here from Me Duke Ellington

By the second album these additional tunes appeared

The Man from Harlem- Cab Calloway, 1932
Reefer Man (excerpt), Harlen Lattimore and his Connie's Inn orch., 1932
Swing Brother Swing- Count Basie ,1937