

The Boston Globe

A sparkling show of jazz, capped by a legend

By Bill Beuttler, Globe Correspondent | January 7, 2006

Clark Terry may have been the oldest guy in the room when he and his goddaughter, vocalist Shawn Monteiro, played the opening set of their two-night stand at Scullers on Thursday. But not by much.

In fact, the gathering of local legends who turned out to catch the 85-year-old trumpet great had the feel of a reunion. Local piano hero Al Vega had a front-row seat. So did Lennie Sogoloff, of the long-gone North Shore club Lennie's on the Turnpike. And longtime Globe music writer Ernie Santosuosso was in the audience, too.

These three knew as well as anyone there what Terry was talking about when he took the stage in the latter half of the show. Scullers entertainment director Fred Taylor, playing straight man, asked him, "Clark, how do you spell legend?"

Terry's deadpan reply: "O-L-D."

By that point, Monteiro and her backing band -- pianist John Harrison, bassist Paul Del Nero, and drummer Yoron Israel -- had already put on a sparkling show. They set the mood with a pair of upbeat numbers, "That Old Black Magic" and "It Might as Well Be Spring." Then Monteiro shifted gears for a lovely reading of the ballad "Music That Makes Me Dance," from her album "Visit Me." Harrison played a soft, gorgeous solo on the piece, which had at least one woman in the audience dabbing away tears.

Monteiro mentioned having lost her father, bassist Jimmy Woode, since the last time she'd played Scullers, and moved on to a piece from Duke Ellington's "Degas Suite." It was fitting -- Woode and Terry had been best friends while touring together

with Ellington's orchestra in the 1950s.

Terry opted for the deeper, more mellifluous sound of his flugelhorn as he joined the band for a pair of instrumental numbers. He started by leading his professorial sidemen (Harrison teaches at UMass-Dartmouth, Del Nero and Israel at Berklee) through an advanced seminar in the blues on "The Hymn," beaming as his sure, concise solo was applauded. "We're going to do a tune that was popularized by Miles Davis," Terry announced next, introducing "I Don't Want to Be Kissed (By Anyone but You)."

Monteiro rejoined Terry onstage for some scat-heavy vocal duets, highlighted by Terry's comically mumbling his way through some nonsense syllables, along with some lines about enjoying chitlins on the Champs-Elysees. The audience ate it up.

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Shawnn Monteiro comes to PAAM

By Cheryl Kain

July 28, 2006



Jazz vocalist Shawnn Monteiro

"Shawnn Monteiro is one of music's most underappreciated vocalists," says The Hartford Courant, and audiences will have the rare treat of hearing her perform at the Dick Miller jazz Series at Provincetown Art Association and Museum (PAAM) this Wednesday.

At the PAAM show, Monteiro will be joined by her longtime pianist, John Harrison. "I've been working with him for about 25 years now. He wrote 95 percent of my book! I can do a lot with John that I can't do with other piano players." Also with Monteiro will be the talented Laird Boles and Bart Weisman, on bass and drums respectively.

Monteiro's resume reads like the ultimate "Who's Who of Jazz." She counts her musical heroes as Carmen McRae and Sarah Vaughan. "I feel like I was born 30 years too early," she laughs. She also draws inspiration from her own genes - Monteiro's father was the late renowned bassist Jimmy Woode, veteran of the Duke Ellington band. "My dad left me a lot of charts," says Monteiro. Her godfather is flugelhorn and trumpet player Clark Terry, best known for his work with Bessie Smith and Duke Ellington. Terry appeared regularly on the Tonight Show, where his unique "mumbling" scat singing became famous.

Monteiro has shared the stage with the most prestigious names in jazz -- Spyro Gyra, Clark Terry, Ray Brown, Lionel Hampton, Kenny Barron, The Nelson Riddle Orchestra, Keter Betts, Jimmy Cobb (of Miles Davis fame), and Stanley Jordan, to name just a few. Monteiro's inimitable voice, with its rich, warm timbre, is one of those instruments that come along once in a lifetime. Ask anyone - from the super-picky Jazz Times Magazine to the local Providence Journal-Bulletin - and you'll hear phrases like "remarkable", "demanding riveted attention" and "pulling all the sweetness or sorrow, joy or sassiness that can be had ..."

While you may be fortunate enough to catch Monteiro at Neath's in Providence; Atlantic Beach Club or Sardella's in Newport, she tours Europe as a jazz superstar most of the year with her rendition of The American Songbook. In Europe, all the Jazz Festivals are free, as the government actively sponsors the arts; Monteiro has to play where they pay, which unfortunately doesn't give her as much time at home as she might like. Monteiro plays the Eurojazz Festival, Milan Jazzfest, JVC Jazz Festival; also festivals in Genova, Naples, Umbria and Ronsiglione; as well as in Dubai, Germany, Spain, Switzerland, Austria, Croatia, and Russia. In the States, Shawnn's voice is well known at renowned Village Vanguard, The Rainbow Room and The Blue Note in New York, Scullers and Berklee Performing Arts Center in Boston, The Hilton and Caesar's Palace in Las Vegas, as well as Newport Jazz Festival, Hartford and others.

In America, rigid ideas of youth and beauty, which hold true for young pop music princesses, are slowly seeping into the Jazz marketplace as well. "Everyone thinks they need to look like (vocalists) Diana Krall or Jane Monheit," laughs Monteiro. "The great thing is, as far as my level, it doesn't know any age," she adds. Indeed, Monteiro has her own look and her own sound, which you'll want to experience for yourself. Rumor has it that her stage presence is dynamic, commanding and mesmerizing, and this jazz singer doesn't keep this gold mine all to herself - she shares her gifts in many other ways as well.

Monteiro teaches Jazz Vocals at Rhode Island College in Providence, where she is ongoing Artist-in-Residence, and leads a Master Vocal Class in Rome and Genova, Italy every summer (see www.ronciglionejazz.it). Besides being one of the best vocalists and stylists around today, Monteiro is also a wife and mother, and she and her husband call Providence home.

If you ask a hip-hop youth today who Count Basie was, they don't have an answer. "Jazz is the American art form, yet America does not support it as well as it could," says Monteiro. "Young people don't have opportunities to go sit in and develop their instrument," she adds. Monteiro recently purchased a trombone for her grandson - if she hadn't, the school wouldn't have been able to afford to teach him. These days, Monteiro's godfather and longtime collaborator Clark Terry is still a music educator at the age of 86 -- he travels the country teaching young people. "He's my inspiration!" exclaims Monteiro. Years ago, Monteiro went around with Jodi Klinger with the Cape Cod Jazz Society to offer one-hour jazz programs to Cape Cod schools, from

kindergarten on up. "For the little ones, we'd play the theme from The Flintstones, just jazzed up a bit!"

Monteiro began her career back in San Francisco, where she played five nights a week in a club, for over \$100 a night. There just aren't yet enough jazz clubs around New England to support young, emerging talent. The clubs that do offer jazz tend to promote the image-friendly singers such as Tierney Sutton, Diana Krall and Jane Monheit. And to many a singer, jazz can still have a "boy's club" mentality. A "chick singer" must earn her respect from the purist instrumentalists. In fact, at Monteiro's Master Class in Italy, one day is focused entirely on how to command respect from your players.

Monteiro is in the planning stages for her next album, due in the fall. Monteiro is always pleased to perform around her New England home, and is excited about singing in the beautiful new space at PAAM. "You may see me on BET (Black Entertainment Television) one day and at Sculler's or PAAM the next day."

JazzTimes®

MAY 2004

Shawnn Monteiro/Clark Terry One Special Night

Whaling City Sound

By [Christopher Loudon](#)

Speaking of family outings, a few months ago Boston-



based chanteuse Shawnn Monteiro captured quite the jazz party on disc when she teamed with trumpeter Clark Terry and bassist Jimmy Woode—her godfather and father, respectively—plus drummer Jimmy Cobb and pianist John Harrison III for a couple of raise-

the-roof evenings at Beantown's Sculler's club. The resultant blistering (if erroneously titled) *One Special Night* (Whaling City) is the sort of meeting of musical masterminds that comes along far too rarely.

Terry takes flight on his deliciously playful new "Having Chit'lins on the Champs Elysees," then segues into a breezily satisfying rendition of Monk's "Let's Cool One." For the balance of the album's 10 tracks he's matched step for sizzling step by the sublime Monteiro. Together, they tackle a raucous eight-and-a-half minute blues medley (with Terry demonstrating a gravelly vocal prowess reminiscent of jazz connoisseur Bill Cosby). Then Monteiro, who simultaneously suggests the authority of Aretha Franklin, the jazz smarts of Carmen McRae and the sassy perspicacity of Dinah Washington, all the while sounding eerily similar to Sarah Vaughan, maneuvers a triple-play of "All My Tomorrows," "The Nearness of You" and "Sunday" more smashing than anything ever belted out of Fenway Park.

Hartford Courant

Jazz Festival In Park Comes To A Steamy, Emotional Close

By Chuck Obuchowski
SPECIAL TO THE COURANT
July 18, 2006

“It’s hot, y’all!”

Shawnn Monteiro’s exasperated exclamation may have seemed a statement of the obvious Sunday afternoon to thousands of sweaty jazz fans at the Greater Hartford Festival of Jazz in Bushnell Park. But it also served as a rallying cry for one of the music’s most underappreciated vocalists, who brought the sun-baked crowd to life with her exhilarating treatment of such jazz classics as “If I Were a Bell” and “On Green Dolphin Street.”

Accompanied by pianist John Harrison’s trio, Monteiro exhibited the charming, blues-savvy influence of her singing heroines, Carmen McRae and Sara Vaughan. The Rhode Island-based vocalist, who performed 10 years ago at this festival, acknowledged her appreciation for Hartford, where he debut recording, “Visit Me,” enjoyed healthy sales in 1992.

The weekend festival’s emotional high point occurred when Monteiro invited her godfather, trumpeter Clark Terry, to join her onstage for several selections. The 85-year-old brass master, clearly weakened by age and illness, received constant encouragement and support from his goddaughter throughout their set. He began with a valiant but ragged flugelhorn feature, “Let’s Cool One,” a Thelonious Monk tune Terry first performed with the composer on a classic 1958 recording session for Riverside Records.

Much more successful were Monteiro’s vocal duets with Terry, which showcased his still-radiant sense of humor and his trademark “mumbles” scat-singing style. A sweet rendition of the Duke Ellington chestnut “Just Squeeze Me” had many in the crowd wiping their eyes as they observed the loving musical bond between them.

Monteiro returns to Hartford Sept. 17 to perform for the 45th annual Hartford Jazz Society Connecticut River Cruise. Also on that date will be longtime Hartford resident

trombonist Steve Davis, who followed Monteiro onstage Sunday at Bushnell Park with his All-Star Sextet.

Davis, a veteran of several Greater Hartford Festival of Jazz concerts, has developed into one of the most renowned trombonists in jazz since he first arrived in Connecticut to study with Jackie McLean at the Hartt School during the 1980s. His band Sunday included onetime McLean sideman Larry Willis on piano. The formidable keyboardist is also a talented composer, as was demonstrated by the ensemble’s enchanting interpretation of his “To Wisdom, The Prize.”

Nat Reeves, Davis’ colleague at the University of Hartford for almost two decades, provided his unusual unflinching support on bass. Drummer Joe Farnsworth and trumpeter Jim Rotundi also added to the postbop steam, but it was vibraphonist Steve Nelson who produced the most memorable solos with this sextet. Nelson’s introspective variations on the Henry Mancini ballad, “Moment to Moment,” were typical of the vibist’s quiet strength. A studio version of this piece appears on Davis’s new CD, “Update.”

The Woody Herman Orchestra brought the 2006 Greater Hartford festival to a swinging close with its crowd-pleasing mix of nostalgia and contemporary big-band instrumental pyrotechnics.

Although Herman died in 1987, his protégé, Frank Tiberi, continues to lead the orchestra with the same brand of showmanship that had many old-timers in Bushnell Park nodding their approval. Herman orchestra favorites such as “Four Brothers” and “Apple Honey” still generate excitement, especially in the hands of such outstanding soloists as trombonist John Fedchock and trumpeter Barry Ries.

Former Hall High School whiz kid Pete McGuinness had a few moments in the spotlight on both trombone and scat vocals. The band’s current vocalist, Brienn Perry, was featured on four songs, but the orchestra’s strongest suit remains its many talented instrumentalists. Pianist Andy Laverne and saxophonist/flutist Mark Vinci deserve special mention for their consistently creative solos, which helped breathe new life into pieces that have been in the orchestra’s repertoire for 50 years or more.

Trumpeter Mavin Stamm, a Herman Orchestra alumnus, opened the main stage events Sunday with a refreshing, understated set. His quartet included pianist Bill Mays, bassist Rufus Reid and drummer Ed Soph.

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attractive, if conventional, picture of Monteiro and illustrates Terry's remarkable durability as a musician.

Review

by Alex Henderson

It isn't hard to understand why Shawnn Monteiro would call this release *One Special Night*. Recorded live at Sculler's in Boston in 2002, this CD finds the underexposed jazz singer joining forces with some of bop's true heavyweights, including trumpeter Clark Terry, bassist Jimmy Woode



(Monteiro's father), and drummer Jimmy Cobb; John Harrison III, a capable pianist, is also on board. *One Special Night* underscores the fact

that while Monteiro is hardly the most original or groundbreaking singer in the world, she's enjoyably good at what she does -- and the singer's basic recipe (a strong Carmen McRae influence with traces of Sarah Vaughan and Marlena Shaw) serves her well when she wraps her big, full-bodied voice around overdone standards like "Just in Time," "All My Tomorrows," and "The Nearness of You." Monteiro isn't terribly adventurous -- not stylistically, not in her choice of material -- but she gets the job done and does so in an expressive, soulful fashion. Although Monteiro is featured on most of the tracks, she lays out a few times and lets the quartet take over on Thelonious Monk's "Let's Cool One" and Terry's playful "Having Chit'lins on the Champs Elysees, Paris" (which gives Terry a chance to sing and have some humorous fun with his Mumbles character). It should be noted that Terry was 81 when *One Special Night* was recorded -- not exactly a spring chicken, but the veteran improviser certainly isn't showing his age on any of these performances; in fact, his chops are holding up impressively well. *One Special Night* doesn't offer a lot of surprises, but it's a solid disc that paints an