

Allison plays the blues tonight

By Cliff Hicks
Staff Reporter

When legendary blues guitarists come to mind, people may think of B.B. King and John Lee Hooker. But they shouldn't forget Luther Allison.

Allison, who's been playing blues for more than 26 years, takes the stage at the Zoo Bar tonight.

"I wanted to be a baseball player," Allison admitted. "I grew up with music and kept fighting it off. But the more I fought it off, the more I knew I was going to be a musician."

It was also beneficial that Allison was the friend of blues legend Muddy Waters' son, who eventually introduced him to all the blues greats.

After quitting school and giving up the shoemaking trade, he began concentrating on music full-time. He made his first recordings in 1967 as a sideman with Sunnyland Slim and Shakey Jake.

In 1969, Allison rocked the blues world at the influential Ann Arbor Blues Festival and was invited back to headline the following two festivals.

Then in 1972, he signed to Motown Records, where he recorded three albums as the only blues act on the label.

During the early 1980s, after Allison found wide acceptance in Europe, he moved to Paris, and his American influence began to subside.

In 1994, however, Allison released "Soul Fixin' Man," his first U.S. release in 20 years, and began touring in the States.

After a well-received appearance at the Chicago Blues Festival, he released his latest album, "Blue Streak," which his current tour supports.

The anticipation for "Blue Streak" was immense, as the "House Of Blues" radio program debuted the album on more than 100 radio stations the weekend before its re-



Courtesy of Alligator Records

Legendary blues guitarist Luther Allison brings his music to the Zoo Bar tonight.

lease. Many people have commented, however, that Luther Allison's strength is in his live shows. They have been described as everything from "ferocious" to "slashing."

Now on his fourth U.S. tour,

Allison hopes to reach as many people as possible.

"I feel like it's my time now and I'm gonna have some fun," he said.

The show at the Zoo Bar begins tonight at 9.

Marsalis, jazz orchestra return to classical artistry

By Jeff Randall
Music Critic

It was like something out of the movies. When Wynton Marsalis and the Lincoln Center Jazz Orchestra took the stage at the Lied Center for Performing Arts Saturday night, everyone in attendance was transported back in time.

Back to an era in which showmanship, precision musical artistry, and good taste prevailed in the world of entertainment.

Back to a time when jazz was king. For a large portion of the audience, that time was a memory and, in all likelihood, a fond one. But for the younger and less knowledgeable others, myself included, that time has been relegated to images on the American Movie Classics network and, God forbid, the History Channel.

Saturday night, though, even the youngest jazz fan found future memories to talk about. Marsalis and the Lincoln Center Jazz Orchestra served up a blistering two hours of big band jazz that satisfied everyone present.

Consisting mostly of works by Duke Ellington, the performance was a tribute in the greatest of forms—short on the sentimentality, long on the actual performance.

Marsalis conducted the band and worked the crowd with two seemingly different personas.

While engaging in the expected chat-between-songs, he appeared somewhat nervous and unprepared, but always managed to end up pulling laughter from the crowd. His offhand remarks and the occasional long pause broke the ice immediately.

But when he turned back to face the band, all traces of nervousness were dispelled, as he assumed the role with which he obviously felt most comfortable.

Picking up his own trumpet to join the band on a couple of other tunes revealed another persona, that of a confident and tremendously gifted individual who was doing what he truly loved.

The rest of the group seemed equally confident and secure in its ability. Some members, however, seemed to shine with an even more intense glow.

Drummer Herlin Riley sat near the back of the stage, constantly moving and keeping the beat with a loose style that never wavered and never bored.

Vocalist Milt Grayson joined the band on a few songs, letting his smooth and low voice slip over the crowd like a silk sheet. His debonair demeanor and slow-motion movements accompanied his vocal style perfectly.

Trombonist Wycliffe Gordon played with pure emotion, letting the sliding sounds of his instrument convey nearly every emotion ever felt. He laughed, cried, and jeered without ever uttering a word.

Victor Goines took center stage in a series of solos on nearly every song. His ability at working both the clarinet and the tenor saxophone was highlighted without visual flair or particular featured moments, but merely by letting him play.

Other star players included trumpeters Jesse McGuire and Ryan Kisor, pianist Eric Reed, and baritone saxophonist Joe Temperley.

The entire band was at its best, though, when the individual players were pulled back into the mix and the music was left to speak for itself.

Highlights included a medley of "Death of Jazz," an original composition, and "Second Line," a selection from Ellington's "New Orleans Suite."

Tito Puente's "Mambo Beat" was an equally exceptional song that fired both the crowd and the band up, establishing an energy level that was maintained throughout the performance.

That energy continued even as the band left, playing as they walked backstage, and continued playing from behind the side curtains. Riley remained alone in view, almost as though he were keeping the music alive single-handedly.

But in the end, no one was needed to keep that music alive. It did just fine on its own.




ATTENTION!

The Bill Bellamy Comedy Show scheduled for October 17th has been cancelled. We apologize for any inconveniences. Bill will be taping a new sitcom pilot that week and will be unable to be in Lincoln.

Individuals who have already purchased tickets can get a refund from the Lied Center Box Office. UPC is looking for a replacement entertainer on October 17th.

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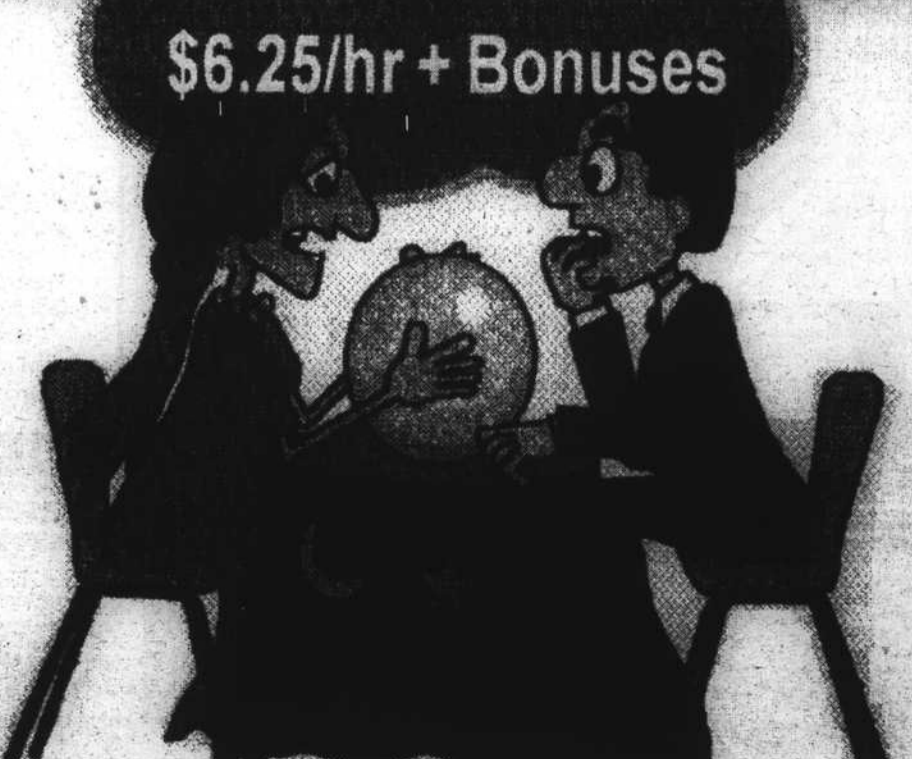
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