

Sandy on Jazz

On February 26 I had the urge to go hear some jazz (I was in NY that week). I browsed through the N.Y. Times picks and saw that Michel Legrand was playing at Birdland with Ron Carter and Lewis Nash. I knew Michel was a French composer and jazz pianist. Somewhere in the dim recesses of my memory I remembered that I had an old soundtrack composed by Michel from a French film on which Miles Davis was featured. It all sort of clicked so I headed uptown on the F train. Little did I realize the treat I was in store for.

Michel Legrand is one of the world's great composers. He has won 3 Oscars and 5 Emmys and, in his own words, "I'm in charge of love." You quickly get the point when you realize some of his compositions include "I Will Wait for You", "The Windmills of Your Mind", "Watch What Happens", "What are You Doing the Rest of Your Life", "You Must Believe in Spring", "Once Upon a Summertime" etc, etc.



And did I mention he is also a great pianist? It is always amazing to hear a great composer perform their compositions because they know exactly what they had in mind. In this case his piano playing was absolutely sublime and his vocals, while not exactly pure, were incredibly emotional and passionate. Of course Ron Carter is one of **the** great bass players and Lewis Nash's drumming was very tasty.

I stayed for both sets Tuesday and returned Sunday night so my fiancé Anne could experience it. I just never realized who was responsible for many of my favorite songs. Now I know. I am not that familiar with his CDs but I did pick up a great one, "Michel Legrand by Michel Legrand" on Decca 289 468 512-2. It's Michel playing solo piano with many of his favorites. I also understand there is a great Sarah Vaughn CD with her singing Legrand. He will return at the same time next year; so will we. Happy Listening!

Onward & Upward,

Sandy Gross

Sandy Gross is the Founder and President Emeritus of Definitive Technology and is a huge Jazz fan with an impressive collection on vinyl and CD. Sandy periodically reports on the Jazz concerts he attends.