



Noteworthy

Fradley Garner International Editor *Jersey Jazz*

TAKE A VOCAL COURSE, GET A GIG IN THE APPLE...GUESS THIS MUSICIAN'S NAME, WIN HIS CD...WHY MORE CHICK SINGERS THAN MEN?...RONNIE SCOTT'S WIDOW AND DAUGHTER PEN A MEMOIR, RUN A BOOKING AGENCY IN BROOKLYN

AMAZING GRACE SHE IS:

A vocal jazz teacher on the faculty of New York University whose own flourishing career was compromised by a rare brain inflammation that left her “prone to seizures and damaged my vocal instrument.” There’s more. Grace Testani has had four breast cancer operations. So what does the lady do? Pours more energy into Grace Notes Music & Creative Computing Center. Coaches private vocal classes, including a course for fledgling vocalists, “Sing Anywhere Performance Prep.” A live Manhattan club gig is guaranteed. Grace gets a JAZZ2U grant from the Jazz Education Network and Herb Alpert Foundation and goes online this year for the first time to teach Lush Lives — Jazz Vocalists. “We talk about why Billie [Holiday] is such a big influence on all singers. And still endures today,” adds Ms. Testani. The lady still manages to perform in New York. She rues a late-nineties New Year’s gig in Wayne, NJ. “They filed for bankruptcy next day because they couldn’t pay for all the acts they hired.” Still with her are “my favorite pianist Jim McNeely who lives in Montclair, and bassist Mike Richmond from Teaneck. They back me on my album, *Something’s Coming*.” Sample it on Amazon, And do visit www.gracenotesmusic.com or call 212-222-6632.

WHO WROTE THIS? The right answer could win you his latest CD: “Whew...this music, in all its varied forms, has the most-stamped passport in the world! It travels to all nations and crosses all borders. It is endlessly adaptable and makes friends everywhere. In its way, it is more powerful



Ronnie Scott's Club, 47 Frith Street, Soho, London, England.
Photo by Adrian Pingstone.

than any world leader, as it is welcomed unconditionally in more places. Thank you Louis Armstrong! — and many others — for giving this music to the world. Under often adverse conditions, they built this road that I — and so many others — am able to tread so easily today...a road that goes around and around our globe. If I can find a way to perform in Antarctica, the music goddess will have taken me to every continent.” A New York-based master of most wind instruments wrote this in his January newsletter. First three readers (NJJS officers and JJ staff excluded) who email me his name win the musician’s new CD. Hint: His first name starts with S. Deadline: March 15, 2014. FradleyGarner@gmail.com.

WHY ARE THERE more female than male jazz singers? The question was raised by “Nia C” on the LinkedIn blog, *Jazz Friends*. Lawrence Boisen, a freelance writer and composer believes it’s because men are more likely to learn an instrument. “If the

female vocalist does play an instrument,” he writes, “90 percent of the time it’s piano. There aren’t a hell of a lot of female trumpet, trombone or sax players.” Aberjhani, the nom de plume of an author and journalist, notes that “Women were not as readily accepted as instrumentalist[s] during the development of jazz ... but they were as vocalists, partly because of their beauty, partly...their voices.” This became a tradition, although nowadays “more women are beginning to expand their roles in the music.”

RONNIE SCOTT DAY was celebrated January 28 by the daily Long Island-based online site, JazzOnTheTube.com. The name should ring a bell in rhythmic music circles. It may toll louder here in Northern Europe, where fans connect it with the London-based tenor saxophonist who founded Europe’s best-known jazz venue, Ronnie Scott’s Jazz Club. Ronnie liked to say his main claim to fame was that, as a young boy, “I was taught to play by Vera Lynn’s father-in-law.” In fact, it’s the SoHo club that has kept his name alive since he passed in 1996. Last year, while the club was being redecorated, a huge sign with a giant photo of its founder greeted passersby on the Frith Street façade — along with his one-liner: “I love this place, it’s just like home, filthy and full of strangers.” Few know that Ronnie’s widow, Mary Scott, lives in Brooklyn, NY, and runs a management and booking agency for musicians. She and her daughter, Rebecca Scott, have written a memoir, *A Fine Kind of Madness: Ronnie Scott Remembered*, with a foreword by Spike Milligan. Check it on Amazon.com. 

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