



# JAZZ PIZZAZZ IN THE GARDEN

BY DAVID MORRISON

Concerning music-related days out this summer, it doesn't get much better than this. As if the magnificent setting of Milner Gardens is not enough, **Jazz in the Garden** (Sunday, August 16) presents surely the finest gathering of Canadian jazz talent assembled anywhere in the country in recent times. Committed jazz devotees keenly tuned into the domestic scene will be drooling at the stars lined up for them, but a glance at just a few of the diverse musical giants with whom the cast has collectively worked in one capacity or another should be enough to widen the eyes of even the most casual appreciator of the genre. Get a load of these names:

Stevie Wonder, Miles Davis, Corinne Bailey Rae, Pat Metheny and...

Hailing from White Rock, acclaimed pianist *Amanda Tosoff* grew up listening to the greats, citing such as Duke Ellington and Thelonious Monk among her main influences. Like every performer featuring at **Jazz in the Garden**, Tosoff is an award-laden musician, having already received a sackful of accolades at just twenty-five years old. But then it's little wonder when hearing the assured style and intelligent original compositions that have critics unanimous in marking Tosoff a fast-rising star.

At this performance the wunderkind pianist will be joined by a special guest, trumpeter *Ingrid Jensen*. Vancouver-born, Nanaimo-

have encountered the *Marc Atkinson Trio* by now, I'd have thought. But if not you simply must hear these guys play, so drop everything and go hunt down one, more or all of their four CDs (entitled 'I' to 'IV'). A dazzling guitarist, Atkinson melds the "Jazz manouche" of late-1930s Paris to elements of the beautiful bluegrass-folk he creates in his other major outfit, The Bills. Trust me, this will be a very special set.

...Victor Lewis, Bryan Adams, John Scofield, Ian Tyson and...

As the name clearly implies, the *Canadian Jazz All-Stars* is a combo boasting an embarrassment of personnel riches that by rights should deliver a show to live long in the memory. The band features Edmonton's revered saxophonist *P.J. Perry*, the Powell River-born multi-instrumentalist *Don Thompson*, and from Montreal the legendary bass player, *Michel Donato*. But the icing on the All-Stars delicious cake is a special guest appearance from

raised and now living in Queens, New York, the accomplished Jensen is a graduate of Boston's famous Berklee College of Music. Besides her chosen instrument she is also a brilliant exponent of another not so rife in jazz – the flugelhorn.

...Herbie Hancock, the Brecker Brothers, Aretha Franklin, James Galway and...

Those of a Django Reinhardt gypsy jazz guitar persuasion will most likely

the much-loved smooth jazz singer, *Joani Taylor*. A crew of deeply skilled "musician's musicians", expect these guys and gal to lift the roof...if there was a roof!

...Dizzy Gillespie, Gino Vannelli, Michel LeGrand, Oscar Peterson...and countless others.

At **Jazz in the Garden** there will be great anticipation in proud local attendees for the appearance of one of Qualicum Beach's favourite sons, *Phil Dwyer*. A greatly respected figure in international jazz circles as not only an adroit saxophonist and pianist but a gifted composer and arranger, Dwyer returned home five years ago after fifteen years' working as an in-demand session musician (amongst other musical things) in Toronto. He remains as busy as ever, yet represents a great example of a successful individual giving back to their community in his work as a "music mentor" and founder of the unique Phil Dwyer Academy of Musical & Culinary Arts.

Dwyer will be appearing on this occasion as guest of the *Seamus Blake Quartet*. Based in New York, Blake was born in England but raised in Vancouver and is widely acclaimed as one of the hottest natural tenor saxophone players to emerge in years. Another Berklee

graduate, he's known for his effortless style and inventive playing. The team-up with Dwyer promises to be extraordinary.

All of this incredible music is yours for the equivalent of just nine bucks an hour, played out in the lush wonder of Milner Gardens, right on the ocean. As I said, it doesn't get much better than this.

**Jazz in the Garden** will run from noon until 5:00pm to make the best of what is obviously hoped to be a meteorologically untroubling day. Tickets

are \$45 and available now from Milner Gardens, Mulberry Bush Bookstores in Qualicum Beach and Parksville, Turley's Florist in Nanaimo and the V.I.U. Nanaimo Campus Bookstore. ~

(Tickets are available to Milner Gardens & Woodland members at the discounted price of \$35. Visit [www.viu.ca/MilnerGardens/membership.asp](http://www.viu.ca/MilnerGardens/membership.asp) for details.)



Gordon Laffleur photo

Phil Dwyer