



UAPRESENTS STUDENT CRITIC PROGRAM

T.S. Monk: “Monk on Monk”

Review by Myrna Amavisca

To me, jazz is the music of the city; it represents the lives city dwellers endure, where they live, their excitements, and their despair. When I found out I was going to T.S. Monk: “Monk on Monk”, I was pretty excited! I love the way jazz sounds, from the low rhythmic bass, to the blaring trombones. As the lights in Centennial Hall dimmed, I saw a man dressed in an all-white suit come out, followed by the rest of the jazz band. The white-suited man introduced himself as T.S. Monk, in a calm and charismatic way. Almost immediately after he introduced himself, I already knew I was in for a great show.

After salutations were said and done, Monk walked to the back of the stage and sat down at the drums. The first song they played was “Evidence” which had quite a low beat, and distinctly cliché toe-tapping rhythm; my favorite part of this song was the drum solo. It was a song you’d expect to hear in a 1920s era speak-easy, while sipping on a bootleg martini. After the song, T.S. Monk once again came down from his drums and began speaking nostalgically of his dad, and how he would write songs about the people closest to him, that he felt represented them; Thelonious Monk even wrote one for himself, “Monks Mood”, which the band then proceeded to play.

“Monks Mood” was my favorite piece, especially the trumpet part in the beginning. The rhythm in this song, wasn’t exactly slow, but more of a smooth calm rhythm. While it was playing, I couldn’t help but think of a small, hazy late-night café, with a full moon outside. The best way I can describe it is, sad, but optimistic; like a man who’s lost everything, but still hasn’t reached *rock* bottom. Throughout the show, the atmosphere of Centennial Hall was calm and mellow, yet also slightly bustling, which enabled the audience to keep focused intently on the music and band.

The last song they played was T,S. Monk’s version of “Think of One”, which had a fantastic bass solo, and was overall very low in pitch; you could almost *feel* the music. “Monk on Monk” is a phenomenal performance that left me feeling nostalgic, and had me wishing I could go back in time to see the original Thelonious Monk.