



UAPRESENTS STUDENT CRITIC PROGRAM

T.S. Monk: “Monk on Monk”

Review by Rubi Duran

On Sunday, March 6th at 7:00 p.m. “T.S. Monk: Monk on Monk” performed at the University of Arizona’s Centennial Hall. As a tribute to his father’s 80th birthday, the legacy of Thelonius Sphere Monk was brought back to life with the same structure of a ten musician group that enabled him to become “The Father of Modern Jazz.” I could just envision how proud he would be of his son and his representation of jazz inspired by his memory. The musicians’ love of jazz was shown on their faces. This performance was full of energy, passion, and most importantly heart.

The night began with a friendly introduction by T.S. Monk himself, emphasizing his excitement for being there, followed by a few jokes that made the audience laugh as they anxiously awaited the music to start. Then, as the background of the stage changed colors, the group members picked up their instruments, leaned back in their chairs and began playing the swinging sound of jazz. Music that told a story about memories and lessons that T.S. learned from his father. Not only T.S., but the entire band showed a great amount of pride that was evident by look on their faces and the energy in their playing.

The combination of low and high sounds going at fast and slow paces was at times relaxing, at other times romantic, and sometimes so full of life and fun. It gave us a flavor of the variety jazz has to offer and the distinctive features of each composition. Between songs the musicians talked and decided which piece would go next; they did so with such a down to earth attitude, as if the music came naturally to them without a need to rehearse. The piano player simply glided her fingers across the keys as if they did not exist and it was her fingers alone that made the sounds. As for the rest, they played with such tranquility that it was hard to tell that they were actually playing. The performance was ninety minutes of truly interesting entertainment.

As someone who had never been to a jazz concert before, I was absolutely surprised by the jingles that remained in my head even after I left the building. I truly felt happiness in the air and I smiled on our way to the car, while recalling T.S. monk’s joyful voice. From the remarkable solos to the amazing ensemble pieces, this group was full of heart and a pleasure for everyone.