



## UAPRESENTS STUDENT CRITIC PROGRAM

### **T.S. Monk: “Monk on Monk”**

Review by Santos Flores

When I think jazz, I think of a waterfall of musical notes toppling over each other, intense muscles simmering under dimmed beams of light, and flailing fingers jabbing brass, ivory, and string. Even though I prefer metal and hard rock over jazz any day, T.S. Monk’s jazz is an unexpected surprise with a great twist.

Before attending a great performance generously provided by the UApresents Student Critics program, the high school student critics met with our UA student mentors. After a quick bite to eat at Pei Wei, we all walked down the street to Centennial Hall. Inside, aside our mentors, we awaited the show to begin.

While waiting, I saw a number of eyes looking in my direction. I understand. It’s not often that you take your seat in Centennial Hall awaiting a greatly anticipated show to begin when suddenly your eyes notice something a bit curious. Not far from your row, there sits a teenager not like the rest. While all the other young audience members look more professional, this one is dressed in a monochromatic palette of grey. That is just a little too odd for this audience -- an older generation. Of course they wonder ‘why’?

Why am I here? I am here because the UApresents Student Critics Program is a great program that has a lot to offer students like me and I was one the lucky students to be accepted.

Not long after Monk took the stage, I couldn’t help but notice his eye capturing white suit, and in his left hand a pair of drum sticks. He shared with the audience stories that he and his father had shared together. He spoke of inspiration that influenced both his and his father’s music.

He finished speaking to the audience, walked about the stage a bit, and whispered to the other group members before taking his seat behind a crescent array of drums. How awesome! I play drums too, but not in a fancy suit-- more like cut off jeans and a T-shirt while I frantically bash and wail to some ear popping noise I call music. I watched as Monk dove into their first song with a head nodding, hip swaying, hand jolting drum intro. The entire group followed not long after. In a way, the music portrayed by the group reminded me of Metal, not because everyone in the group decided

to smash their instruments and jump into the crowd, but simply due to the amazing energy they were able to reflect on the crowd while sitting down.

To put it quite frankly, T.S Monk and his group delivered a stunning show that greatly surpassed my expectations. Audience members danced in their seats, clapped the beat to every other song, and cheered for an encore to complement their standing ovation.