

PREVIEW

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ROAD SHOW

Wealth of sounds

Jazz, and more jazz, filling the Capital District's venues

■ This column spotlights musicians on tour through the Capital District.

By Greg Haymes

Special to The Times Union

Now that the fall season is coming, it seems that the jazz sounds are flying fast and furious, especially on Friday night, when jazz fans will be faced with a wealth of choices.

A Place for Jazz kicks off its fifth season on Friday at the First Unitarian Society of Schenectady's Whisperdome with the fabulous sounds of Washington, D.C. jazz vocalist **Ronnie Wells**. For the 8 p.m. concert, Wells will be backed by her quartet, which features pianist **Ron Elliston**, bassist **James King**, drummer **Mike Smith** and terrific young vibraphonist **Jan Metzger**.

Also on Friday night, jazz fusion fans will flip out over **Tribal Tech**, which takes over the stage at the Metro. The band is led by guitar great **Scott Henderson** — who has taken home top honors in jazz guitar polls in both *Guitar Player* and *Guitar World* magazines — and bassist **Gary Willis** — who was described as "one of the most vital bass voices of the '90s" by *Bass Player Magazine*. "Tribal Tech combines the energy of rock with the sophistication and harmonies of jazz," Henderson explains.

If you like your jazz with a world music flavor, then you should check out **Unu Mondo** at the Eighth Step Upstairs at 8 p.m. Friday. It's a new ensemble with some familiar faces, including multi-instrumentalists **Randy Armstrong** and **Volker Nahrman**, both formerly with the

group **Do'ah**. Offering a high-tech fusion of contemporary jazz, classical and ethnic music, the ensemble also features noted Brazilian percussionist **Henrique Almeida**.

And continuing in the jazz-goes-global vein, saxophonist **Tim Moran** and percussionist **Tony Vacca** team up for a free concert at 8 p.m. Sunday in the Maureen Stapleton Theatre on the Hudson Valley Community College campus.

"Our idea to use instruments and influences from other parts of the world has a long history in the jazz tradition," Moran points out. "We're a part of something that goes back to the beginning of jazz, something which is really the essence of jazz if you look at its origins."

Jazzing it up

Now that the fall season is coming, it seems that the jazz sounds are flying fast and furious, especially on Friday night, when jazz fans will be faced with a wealth of choices, among them: vocalist **Ronnie Wells**, jazz fusion's **Tribal Tech** and world music's **Unu Mondo**. **Page 6**

RONNIE WELLS. 8 p.m. Friday. The Whisperdome at the First Unitarian Society, 1221 Wendell Ave., Schenectady. 374-6912. \$13.50.

TRIBAL TECH. Friday night. The Metro, 17 Maple Ave., Saratoga Springs. 584-9581.

UNU MONDO. 8 p.m. Friday. The Eighth Step Upstairs, 14 Willett St., Albany. 434-1703. \$10.

VACCA/MORAN. 8 p.m. Sunday. The Maureen Stapleton Theatre, Hudson Valley Community College, Troy. 270-7170. Free.

FREEDY JOHNSTON. With special guests Smith & Bakken. Tonight. QE2, 12 Central Ave., Albany. 434-2023.

BIGGERTHOMAS. With special guest Methiskapheles. Saturday night. Bogie's, 297 Ontario St., Albany. 482-4368.

THE MIGHTY MIGHTY BOSSTONES. With special guests Can't Say and Needle Park. 7 p.m. Sunday. Bogie's, 297 Ontario St., Albany. 482-4368.

CATHAL McCONNELL. With special guest Len Graham. 8 p.m. Monday. The Guilderland Performing Arts Center, Tawansentha Park, Guilderland. 765-2815. \$10, \$3 for children.