

Arts & Entertainment

MUSIC

Concord's new piano star: Taylor Eigsti

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added to the mix). Most ingenious is his arrangement of Mussorgsky's "Promenade" from "Pictures at an Exhibition."

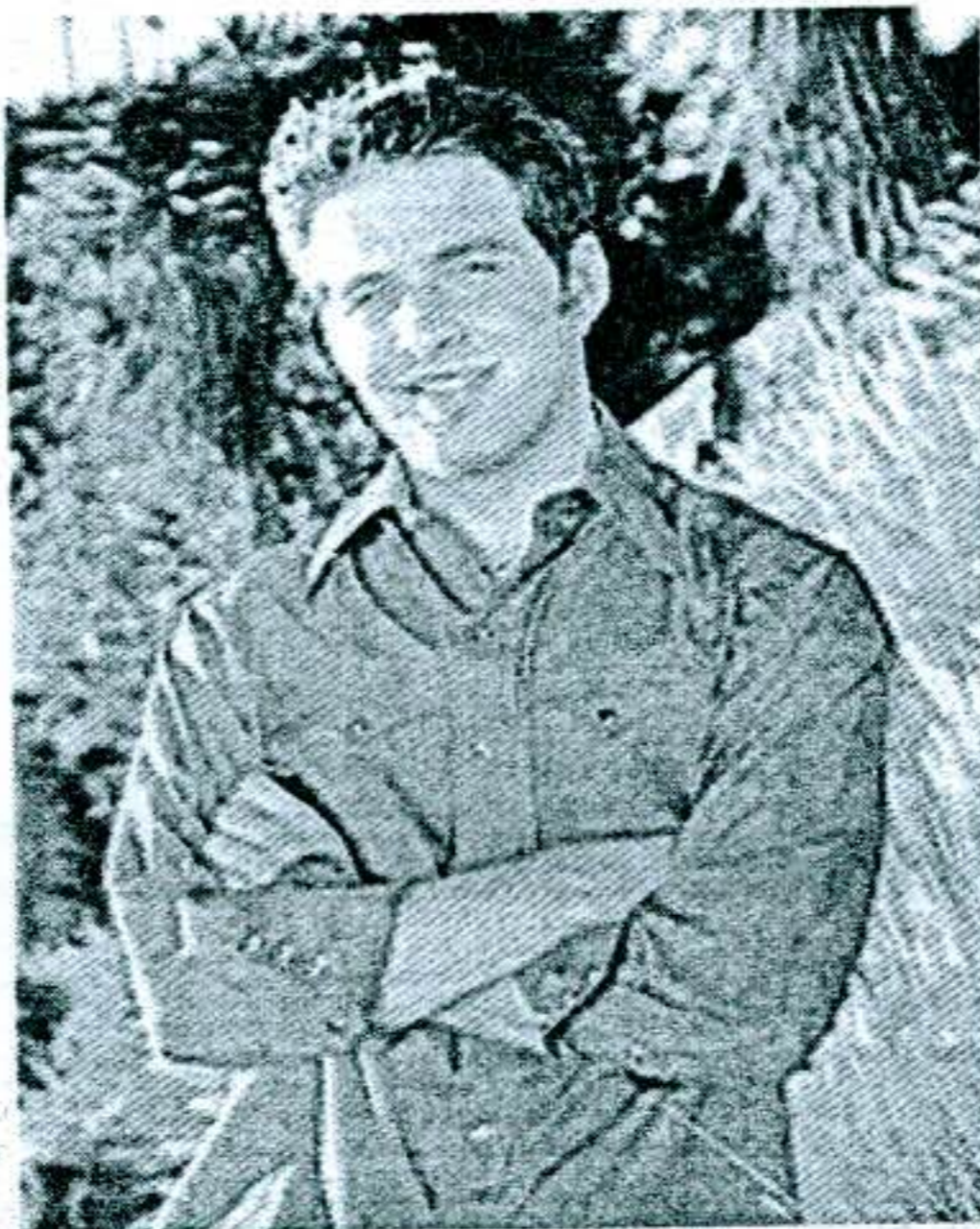
On June 14, Eigsti will appear at the Blue Note club (131 West 3rd St.; 212-475-8592).

Another artist who has been garnering deserved attention lately is jazz singer **Stevie Holland**. Her new CD, "**More Than Words Can Say**" (on 150 Music) was arranged and orchestrated by Gary William Friedman (composer of the songs for the fine musical "The Me Nobody Knows"), who uses a string orchestra on several tracks and a smaller jazz combo on others. Right from the outset, Holland shows off her powerful voice with a soulful rendition of "Only You."

Jerome Kern and Otto Harbach's "Yesterdays" is taken at a sprightly tempo, which tempers the downbeat nostalgia of the lyrics. Thus, she is just as successful at swinging "Murder, He Says," an obscure song from Jimmy McHugh and Frank Loesser. "This Is It" is an interesting reinvention of the pop song by Michael McDonald and Kenny Loggins even if it misses some of the snap of the original. Lerner & Lowe's "If Ever I Would Leave You" from "Camelot" highlights the beauty of her voice.

The sensitive title song is by Holland and Friedman, not to be confused with Otis Redding's "I Love You Baby More Than I Can Say."

It is worth noting that no matter what Holland sings, every syllable



JAZZ PIANIST TAYLOR EIGSTI

comes through with utter clarity. Stevie Holland will appear at Iridium (212-582-2121; www.iridiumjazzclub.com) on Wednesday, June 14 at 9:30 p.m.

"The Jazz Voice: The Ladies Sing Jazz, Volumes 1 and 2" are two invaluable DVDs released by MVD (Music Video Distributors).

They contain some of the greatest singers this country has produced. The downside is that the video and sound quality varies considerably—some numbers are from films and others from television appearances, apparently from the 1950's and 1960's. Some are recognizable, such as the songs from the movie "New Orleans" with Billie Holiday and Louis Armstrong.

However, aside from

which she also sang Olatunji's "Zungo"), showing off her vocal style as well as her prowess on piano in an instrumental number.

The inimitable Ethel Waters sings "Quicksand." Anita O'Day, who is still performing and recently issued an album, "Indestructible," does her famous "Let Me Off Uptown" with Gene Krupa on drums leading his own band featuring trumpeter Roy Eldridge.

The 61-minute DVD ends with six numbers by the bluesy Dinah Washington.

Vol. 2 (running 60 minutes) is just as impressive, starting with Ella Fitzgerald singing her first hit, "A Tiskit, A Taskit," followed by the smooth ballad "Imagination" and finally scatting and swinging through "Lady Be Good." Sarah Vaughan is captured early in her career when she was very slim. Her singing was at its best with her gorgeous multi-octave voice but without the mannerisms that she later developed.

The songs include "The Nearness of You," "Misty" and "Over the Rainbow." She is one of the few singers who could do the latter and not suffer by comparison with Judy Garland. Two of the numbers are in color—the rest are in black and white—but unfortunately the video and sound are out of synch on these performances.

Carmen McRae's appearance is apparently from a television studio in the 1960's and it looks like Norman Simmons was on piano. She was very attractive and her recognizable voice and acerbic style

were in evidence. McRae performs a moody "Round Midnight" and Cole Porter's "Love for Sale."

June Christy, who followed Anita O'Day into Stan Kenton's band, sings three songs, proving that she deserves additional recognition for her body of work: "Ellington's 'Just a Sittin' and Rockin,'" "He's Funny That Way" and "Taking a Chance on Love."

All three are songs associated with black singers but the blonde vocalist does not suffer by comparison. Another white singer who was influenced by African-American artists but who developed her own distinctive style was Peggy Lee, shown here with Benny Goodman (who featured his clarinet playing as much as his singer) in their hit, "Why Don't You Do Right." Lee's rendition of "I Cover the Waterfront" is well sung but the nautical décor is rather ludicrous.

The beautiful Lena Horne does "Born on Friday" confirming that she could perform the blues. Also included is the title song of the movie, "Stormy Weather" in which she starred with Bill "Bojangles" Robinson. The set closes with the ebullient Helen Humes (the female singer with Count Basie during his finest years) singing "Hey Baba Leba."

I wish that MVD would work harder to improve the sound and video as well as to provide more information about the sources, but I will still watch and listen to these unique artists over and over again.

Round & About

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The Guild at 222 Seventh Ave.

Six will hold a full board meet-

ciety will meet the second Friday of May and June at Ascension Church House, 12 W. 11th St. at 7:30 p.m. At

KET—Discover great bargains at Waterside Plaza's annual flea market on Sat., June 10 from 9 a.m.-3 p.m. Featuring nearly 100 commercial vendors

becue Block Party will take place at Madison Square Park from Sat., June 10-Sun., June 11, noon-6 p.m. each day. Guests will have the opportu-

formances by an eclectic group of artists representing the best in American "roots music," from bluegrass and country-folk to vintage rock & roll and