



EUR LIVE MUSIC REVIEW: Jammin' at the 21st Annual UCLA JazzReggae Fest

May 31, 2007

Los Angeles - WOW! I can't believe that another year has gone by and that I was able to celebrate the 21st Annual UCLA JazzReggae Fest with thousands of music lovers from all over Southern California, on May 27 and 28, 2007.

The weather Gods looked down favorably upon this event. The Memorial Day weekend was pleasant with a nice Caribbean breeze blowing from the north east.

The 2007 version of the festival has evolved into Jam Day on previously featured Jazz on Sunday.

I'm glad that the UCLA Cultural Affairs Commission decided to keep some jazz on the line-up. I'm hopeful that more jazz would be added in the near future considering the positive impact that Christian Scott had on the crowd.



Christian Scott

Trumpeter Christian Scott was the lone jazz artist on the bill for Jam Day of the Jazz Reggae Fest. There were probably a handful of people who were aware of this tremendously talented trumpeter from New Orleans. I'm fortunate to have witness Christian Scott arriving on the jazz scene during my many trips to the Crescent City for the New Orleans Jazz and Heritage Festival. I recognized his potential early on while he performed with his uncle-legendary saxophonist Donald Harrison Jr. Mr. Scott is from New Orleans the birthplace of jazz. He follows in the footsteps of trumpet giants from the Crescent City: King Oliver, Louis Armstrong, Wynton Marsalis, Terence Blanchard, Nicolas Payton as well as Irving Mayfield. Christian Scott represents the next generation of jazz cats/young lions who toured extensively with his uncle Donald Harrison Jr. The sprawling outdoor Intramural Field was transformed into an intimate jazz lounge for Mr. Scott's set. He thrilled the capacity audience throughout his set of original tunes- "Anthem", "Dialect"-written in response to Hurricane Katrina, "Line of Fire", "Rewind That" and closed with "Litany Against Fear."

Trumpeter Christian Scott was aided and abetted by David Bryant- keyboards, Luques Curtis-bass, Matthew Stevens-guitar, and Jamire Williams on drums. This tight band left a lasting impression on me as well as many members of the audience assembled for the JazzReggae Fest.

The group Les Nubians consist of siblings Helene and Celia Faussart were another highlight that left a lasting impression. They were regally dressed for the festival. They held the crowds undivided attention throughout their set. Their music reflected their African roots, mixed with some jazzy nuances, funky rhythms and a dash of British soul delivered in their uniquely elegant and expressive French style. I was captivated by their stage presence and delivery on the following tunes- "J'veux d' la musique", "Taboo", "To The Queen", "Makeda", "Temperature Rising", and Sans Regrets." Jam Day also featured the marvelous talents of Dujeous from New York, rap artist Lupe Fiasco, Soulive, J*Davey and concluded with an always crowd pleasing set from Jill Scott a sensational Grammy Award winning vocalist.

Day Two of the UCLA JazzReggae Fest served up a different vibe on Monday. Reggae was music of choice dished out in various forms-roots reggae legend Luciano was the headliner. Other notable performers were Cham, General Degree, Mr. Peppa, LovaBoy, ElJai, Joseph Israel, Syren, Ms. Triniti/E Dee turning up the heat with some dancehall and soca.

A good time was had by all in attendance at the 21st Annual UCLA JazzReggae Fest 2007. This is the largest student run festival in the country.

The 21st Annual UCLA JazzReggae Fest 2007 took the first step to becoming a no-waste, sustainable festival with eco-limos to transport the artists, planting trees to off-set emissions, and featured a sustainable resource area to educate festival-goers. Recyclable plates and utensils were offered in the international food court.

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