



Mark Asche (Piano), Charmine Michelle (Vocals) and Kim Gast (Saxophone), part of the Faculty Jazz Quintet, perform in front of the audience Friday night at the Radisson.

JANA S. HURLEY/STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Faculty gets all jazzed up

SCSU Faculty Jazz Quintet continues to dazzle jazz lovers

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The SCSU Faculty Jazz Quintet continued its monthly concert series Friday at the Radisson Hotel in downtown St. Cloud.

Members of the Quintet include Mark Asche, piano, Professor of Jazz Keyboard; Bruce Heine, bass, Professor of Jazz Bass; Aldin Ikeda, drums; Guy Levilaih, trombone, retired professor from the Foreign

Languages Department; and Kim Gast, saxophone, Director of Jazz Studies program, who also organizes functions for the group.

The Jazz Quintet has been performing since 1995. The group originally started out as an instrumental group before they added a vocalist, Charmine Michelle, in 1997.

Together, the Quintet plays modern jazz, which is jazz from the 1940s to the 1980s, and plays material that pre-dates 1940, such as Billie Holiday.

The group also plays standard jazz literature, which is a mix between Swing, Latin, African, and Cuban jazz.

Although the group is quite popular, they have no aspirations to sign with a record label. They are in the planning

stages of putting together a CD and hoping to get it done within a year.

"Our main objective is to provide an opportunity not only for SCSU students, but for the entire St. Cloud community to be able to hear high quality jazz music in the immediate area and to contribute to the diversity to the musical activities in the St. Cloud area," Gast said.

At the concert, the audience seemed overwhelmed by the quintet's performance. Charmine Michelle's vocals echoed through the room that put the cherry on top for the performance.

"I really enjoyed myself," said Sharon Miller, a resident of St. Cloud. "I can't believe that they can play together so well. It's absolutely breathtaking. And the vocalist is wonderful."

One might imagine that the Quintet must spend hours and hours rehearsing together, but that is not the case at all.

"We all learn the music on our own because of the improvisational nature of jazz," Gast said.

"It's been a great pleasure playing with the other faculty members and it's great to be able to be with them," Asche said.

"I like playing at the Radisson," said Heine, "It's a great place for the faculty to perform."

If you would like to see the Quintet perform at the Radisson Hotel, they will be performing at 7:30 p.m. several times throughout the year, including Nov. 17, Dec. 15, Jan. 19, Feb. 23, Mar. 23, Apr. 20 and May 4.

The concerts are free and open to the public.