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NY CULTURE | September 20, 2012, 10:51 p.m. ET

Getting Sassy and Brassy

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By WILL FRIEDWALD

The Anderson Twins Play the Fabulous Dorseys

59E59

59 E. 59th St., (212) 279-4200

Through Oct. 7

Remember those mind-blowing, computer-generated images in "Inception" where the horizon seemed to turn in on itself? In this semi-theatrical presentation on 59th Street, one can sense the timeline of jazz history being similarly bent around corners as two of the youngest pro musicians around (fairly recent Juilliard grads) celebrate their ideological forebears: Tommy and Jimmy Dorsey, the legendary brothers who dominated much of jazz and pop in the key years of the American experience, both individually and as a team. Even with a mere six musicians (most importantly, the remarkable trumpeter Jon-Erik Kellso) and no trombone or vocalists, saxophonists Pete and Will Anderson not only guide us through the personal and musical high points of the Dorseys' careers, but establish them as gargantuan heroes of a long-departed, almost mythical era, when the ability to play an instrument better than anyone else could make you king of the whole world.



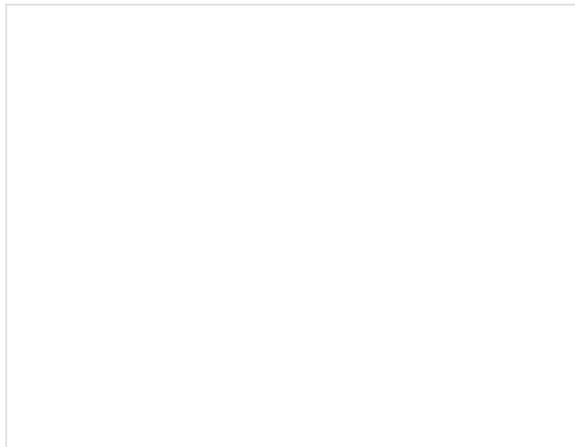
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Lynn Redmile

Pete Anderson, Jon-Erik Kellso and Will Anderson at 59E59.

It's reassuring to know that young jazz musicians would even be attracted to the Dorsey Brothers. For more than 20 years, reed master Jimmy Dorsey (1904-57) and trombone giant Tommy Dorsey (1905-56) cast a giant shadow over the landscape of American culture, in an era when terms like "jazz" and "pop" barely existed and the only kind of noise that was worth making was called "dance music."

Asked what it is that attracts musicians of their generation to music that their great-



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grandparents danced to, Will Anderson answered, "We've felt a connection to the Dorseys ever since we heard 'Oodles of Noodles,' 'Tangerine' and 'I Got Rhythm.' They were the renaissance men of the swing era—masters of their instruments, expert bandleaders, composers, and arrangers."

More than virtuoso players, the Dorseys were tastemakers and gatekeepers. Besides populating the Billboard charts with dozens of hit records, they helped launch the careers of several generations of musical icons, among them Frank Sinatra, Jo Stafford and even Elvis Presley. Added Mr. Anderson, "They set the bar for a pristine presentation of elegant swing music, and never would they compromise on their unique style."

Back in the day, the younger brother pulled focus: Tommy Dorsey was a more dynamic, type-A sort of guy, and he was a natural radio personality. Yet, since both of the Andersons are clarinet and saxophone men, it's not surprising that Jimmy Dorsey gets most of the attention in this show. The brothers' specially crafted orchestral "reductions" of classic Dorsey charts, which are also documented on a new album, "The Anderson Twins Play the Fabulous Dorseys," include four of Jimmy's own compositions—all finger-busting reed showcases. One of these, "Oodles of Noodles," introduces the melody that became Jimmy Dorsey's theme, "Contrasts." Said Mr. Anderson, "They combine the raw grittiness of American jazz with a smooth European dialect—very modern for their time." Although Tommy Dorsey castigated beboppers as "musical communists," his brother was intrigued enough by the nascent modern jazz to commission Dizzy Gillespie's "Grand Central Getaway."

In between numbers at 59E59, the Andersons project scenes from the 1947 biopic "The Fabulous Dorseys," in which the two brothers re-enact their own lives, most famously the legendary tantrum that split the rising Dorsey Brothers Orchestra into two distinct big bands—which, between them, conquered the world. By way of illustration, the Andersons themselves act out parallel episodes of familial bickering. (Their acting is functional at best; no one's predicting a Tony Award.) Squabbles real and re-enactments aside, Will Anderson makes it plain that, "We truly identify with their strong brotherly bond and the joys and difficulties of co-leading a band."

Michael Feinstein & Marilyn Maye: 'Swingin' the Night Away'

Feinstein's at Loews Regency

540 Park Ave., (212) 339-4095

Through Saturday

Prior to this show, you might not have suspected that Michael Feinstein and Marilyn Maye had so much in common: She's a no-holds-barred kind of a hard-core swinger, while he's (to borrow a phrase from Tommy Dorsey) a master sentimentalist, the kind of singer who'll break your heart explaining why he won't send roses. But as a combination, they share all the right attributes: supreme musicality, impeccable timing, extreme intelligence (including a thorough knowledge of the American songbook and showbiz lore) and, above all, a relentless desire to please a crowd. Their tandem presentation is at once collaborative and competitive, especially with the many ingenious medleys they embark on.

Fanfare Ciocarlia

Michael Schimmel Center for the Arts

3 Spruce St., (866) 811-4111

Saturday

This celebrated Balkan brass band never takes its music as a "given"—as a set of

Barbs in Public Feud



Turmoil Returns to Europe Markets



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Real- York

Weather Journal: Wind Whips But Still No Snow

Moderate winds will keep up through the evening Monday, meaning wind chill factors will remain slightly above single digits for much of Greater New York. They start to die around 11 p.m. Monday as weak low pressure passes south of the region.



Friend Who Backed Out of Staten Island Mom's Fatal Trip Speaks

Just days after a Staten Island mom was found dead in Turkey, a friend came forward to say she was supposed to have gone along on the voyage.



High Rise of the Machines: Robots Wash Windows

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What's the Deal: Vacillating Values

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static, hidebound traditions—but rather makes it live and breathe anew each night, constantly changing the rules. Its blend of trumpets, trombones, tubas and woodwinds crashing up against one another in major and minor keys to a distinctive Romani rhythm (hard-pumping rather than hard-swinging) is just the beginning. Fanfare Ciocarlia tours constantly, yet doesn't make it to New York nearly enough; it's especially beloved in the states thanks to its unique treatments of beloved melodies like "Summertime," "The James Bond Theme" (included on CD compilations all over the world), "Born to Be Wild," and especially "Caravan." The latter is a natural for the Fanfares—after all, who knows more about caravans?

LaBella Strings Presents Frank Vignola

ZirZamin

90 W. Houston St., (646) 823-9617
Tuesdays

The back room in the former location of the Zinc Bar has been repurposed into a warm, intimate room with wonderful acoustics. It's the perfect venue for an ongoing guitar series centered around Frank Vignola, a descendent of the great tradition of Italian-American guitarists, protégé of Les Paul, and disciple of Django Reinhardt. This past Tuesday, Mr. Vignola and regular partner Vinny Raniolo joined forces with the equally impressive Julian Lage to form an 18-string super-trio. Yet raw power wasn't on their minds. Instead, they made mellow, swinging music like an ad-hoc Hot Club of Havana: "Quizás, Quizás, Quizás," "Quién será? (Sway)," Ernesto Lecuona's "Malaguena" and "Aquarela do Brasil." The Vignola-Raniolo duo's range is demonstrated on "Melody Magic," an album of mostly 19th-century classical themes, and their eagerness to entertain is made clear by their habit of dancing time-steps even while continuing to play. Says Mr. Raniolo, "It's harder than it looks."

Sex Mob plays Nino Rota

World Financial Center

200 Vesey St.
www.worldfinancialcenter.com
Sept. 27

Besides being a versatile and expressive brass player (especially on slide trumpet), Steven Bernstein has a knack for dreaming up original bands and concepts. His most popular ensemble is probably Sex Mob, a quartet with a punk-rock name and an instrumental format inspired by the 1940 "Big Four" sessions of Sidney Bechet and Muggsy Spanier. Featuring saxophonist Briggan Krauss, bassist Tony Scherr and drummer Kenny Wollesen, the quartet mixes the leader's originals and equally original interpretations of everything from Duke Ellington ("Music and Dance") to 1960s spy-movie themes ("Sex Mob Does Bond"). Their latest project is occasioned by a new exhibition at the World Financial Center, "The Sweet Life," a photographic celebration of the "Golden Age of Italian Cinema." Mr. Bernstein's new interpretations of Nino Rota's classic film themes incorporate Sex Mob's trademark perversity while remaining faithful to the old-world beauty of Rota's "Amarcord" and "La Strada."

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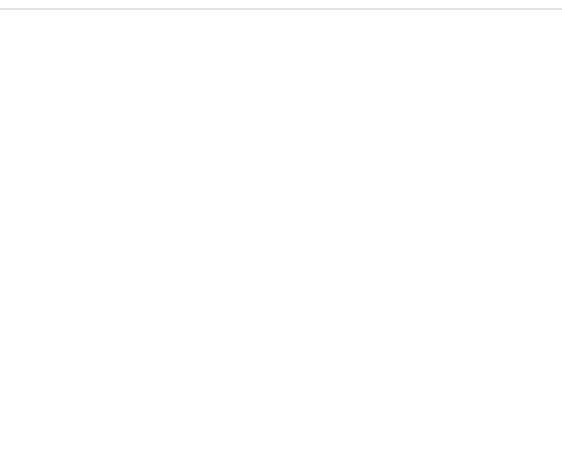
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