

Jazz lovers sample sounds, tastes of Sonoma

Wine & Song Around the Plaza revs up crowd for big festival

By **KEVIN McCALLUM**

THE PRESS DEMOCRAT

SONOMA — The tourists strolling around Sonoma Plaza on Sunday had a noticeable spring in their steps as they bee-bopped to some of the area's best jazz during the second annual

Wine & Song Around the Plaza.

The warm-up act to the Sonoma Jazz + Festival — the evening event hosting big-name acts such as Steve Miller and B.B. King — the Wine & Song took place in seven different venues around the historic plaza between 2 and 5 p.m.

Each location featured a different local jazz act paired with gourmet food and tastes of some of the best Sonoma Valley wines.

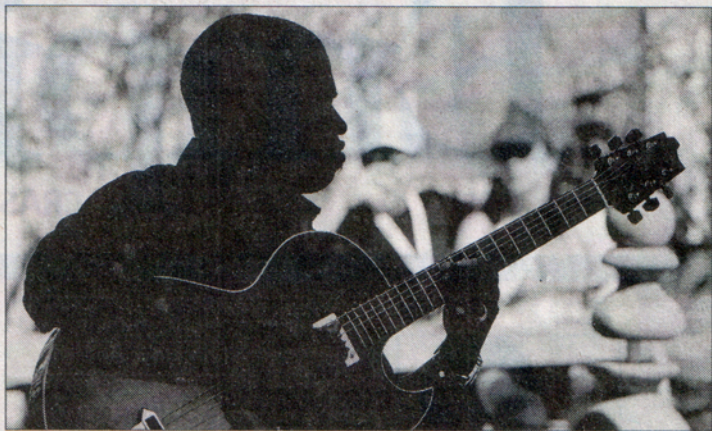
The event was designed to ensure jazz lovers in town for the festival didn't just zip from their hotels to the park north of town for the evening's main attractions. Organizers hoped the daytime event would give them a taste of what Sonoma wineries, merchants and restaurants had to offer as well.

"We're trying to get people out of the park and onto the streets and close to the merchants, and to make

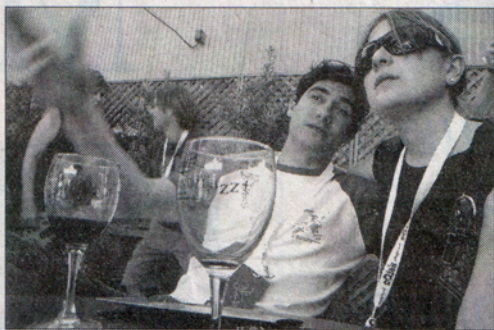
the town of Sonoma be a participant in this," said organizer Bea Oliver.

On the sunny patio behind the Harvest Moon Cafe, visitors drank in the cool jazz of Alameda County jazz guitar impresario Terrance Brewer and his trio. "So far, so good," said 31-year-old Derek Richmond of Arlington, Va., who was visiting the Bay Area with his companion, Sarah Barial, 29, of Alexandria, Va.

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Photos by CHRISTOPHER CHUNG / The Press Democrat



Terrence Brewer, above, entertains at the patio behind The Harvest Moon Cafe Sunday during "Wine & Song Around the Plaza" in Sonoma while, at left, Max Klinger and Kerry Apostolo listen.

SONOMA: Owner says event drew 1,000 to cafe

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Richmond said he was enjoying the wine, 2003 pinot noir from Gundlach Bundschu, a little more than the music, which he said was clearly excellent but a little faster and louder than anticipated.

A lover of deep, resonant bass lines, Richmond said he was sure with so many other offerings, they would soon find a sound that fit their mood. "We're going to a couple more places and see if we can find a place where we can just mellow," Richmond said.

Harvest Moon Cafe owner Nick Demarest said he only agreed to host the event at the last minute after an organizer came to him "in a panic" Friday morning with news that the Plaza Bistro on First Street East couldn't host the event because of a fire at the restaurant the previous night.

The decision was a great one, he said, because more than 1,000 people had visited his restaurant since the start of the event, which ran Satur-

day and Sunday. "It worked out to be a really good thing for us," Demarest said.

Organizer Jennica Lundin said patrons paid \$50 in advance and \$60 the day of for tickets to the event. Tickets included 12 tastes of wine and four tastes of food, in addition to the jazz, she said.

The venues also offered a series of more intimate environments to experience jazz, compared to the main event in a tent that holds 3,800 people, Lundin said.

Though only in its second year, the Sonoma Jazz + event is already getting rave reviews from organizers and fans alike for quality of the acts.

Final attendance figures were not available Sunday, but organizers estimated the event would match last year's figure of 1,500. "We're going to make it better and nicer every year," Oliver said.

You can reach Staff Writer Kevin McCallum at 521-5207 or kmccallum@pressdemocrat.com.