



July 8th The Starry Night Octet

On this warm evening, the Starry Night Octet performed two beautiful sets. Bandleader Matt Lintula explained to the audience that this octet came together due to mutual interest in the music of Dave Pell. Dave Pell lived from 1925 until 2017 during which time he played in over 100 bands. He worked with such greats as Benny Goodman, Artie Shaw, Harry James, Dizzy Gillespie, Ella Fitzgerald, Henry Mancini, Lena Horne, and Barbra Streisand, just to name a few. In the 1950s, Dave Pell started to squeeze the big band sound into smaller groups, ultimately developing the Dave Pell Octet. Many of the best arrangers available worked with Dave to develop his many famous charts. Among these were Andre Previn, Johnny Mandel, and Bill Holman. The Starry Night Octet was able to obtain many of these charts, allowing them to bring this great music to today's audiences.

The Starry Night Octet consists of **Matt Lintula** on sax, **Mike Truszkowski** on trumpet, **Dan Giacobassi** on sax and flute, **Dale Nesbary** on trombone, **Greg Miller** on guitar, **Drew Placzek** on piano, **Joe Oprea** on standup bass and **Mark Lopez** on drums. They played very tight renditions of 21 songs that appeared on the many albums produced by the Dave Pell Octet. As Matt Lintula indicated, the Dave Pell charts generally consisted of relatively short solos allowing the lead to be passed fairly quickly from instrument to instrument. This is not to say that these rather short solos were any less difficult or complex than the longer solos seen in other jazz charts. These solos were written for some of the most famous players of the time and The Starry Night Octet played them all extremely well.

The band started out with upbeat renditions of 42nd St. and Cheerful Little Earful. Next the band played East of the Sun followed by a very bluesy Angel Eyes. Moving back up-tempo with I'm Putting All

My Eggs in One Basket, an Irving Berlin song, made the band really swing. This was followed by Cole Porter's Let's Do It, then an up-tempo version of My Heart Belongs to Daddy followed by a snappy Lulu's Back In Town. An audience favorite, Fly Me to the Moon, closed out the set.

The second half of the concert began with Shuffle Off to Buffalo, after which they played a jazzy rendition of The Victors—the U of M fight song. Matt Lintula explained that the Dave Pell Octet performed at many college dances and recorded several jazz versions of college songs. Next came a fast swinging version of Them There Eyes, then another piece from The Jazz Goes Dancing album. The romantic ballad made famous by Glenn Miller, I Know Why, followed.

Next came Blues My Naughty Sweetie Gives Me, which contained an interesting walking bass entrance. This was followed by Cheek to Cheek and then, in the style of New Orleans, Oh, Didn't He Ramble, which opened with a slow trumpet introduction and a saxophone echo before it began to really swing with the entire ensemble.

The group continued with It Never Entered My Mind by Richard Rogers, a slow beautiful piece in which the alto sax and guitar alternated with the melody while the flute contributed a very interesting counter melody. Our Day Will Come also featured a walking bass that almost began to jog, followed by Walking My Baby Back Home. By the final piece, the crowd was sitting in a comfortable 77° temperature with a nice breeze. This allowed them to fully savor The Continental, the group's concluding number.

Without question, Starry Night Octet gave the audience an extremely enjoyable evening.

-Timothy McAree