

OUR OWN WORLD-CLASS JAZZ PIANIST WINS YET ANOTHER AWARD!

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Our own "Dutch Connection," 11-yr FFS member Rein de Graaff, was recently honored with The Meer Jazz Prize by the town of Haarlem, The Netherlands, this past May. This coveted cultural award was presented by the mayor himself, following a special concert by the internationally-known "Trio Rein de Graaff" accompanied by several guest artists; among them, famed American altosaxophonist, Bud Shank.

Rein is no stranger to international jazz awards, having received The Boy Edgar Prize (in 1980), and The Bird Award (in 1986) at the renowned North Sea Jazz Festival.

He can also be found in several who's-who-in-jazz type publications, including PEOPLE IN JAZZ, and Leonard Feather's ENCYCLOPEDIA OF JAZZ (Biographical Ed.). In addition, his entire career is covered in his Dutch-language biography, BELEVENISSEN IN BEBOP, loosely translated to mean "happenings in bebop."

Rein is, as well, a multi-talented producer, composer and writer; having written for European music magazines for many years, and having jump-started his professional career by playing and singing with a German band at age 19!

His illustrious career has led him to America many times, having performed at Birdland and The Village Vanguard in New York City and the famed Lighthouse Cafe, Hermosa Beach, California.

As a multi-faceted jazz pianist, Rein is just as comfortable and adept with the blues, the "cool school" style of Lennie Tristano, or others, as he is with his beloved bebop. He has performed and/or recorded with such greats as Dexter Gordon, Johnny Griffin, Arnett Cobb, Hank Mobley, Al Cohn, Ted Brown, Teddy Edwards, Lee Konitz, Charles McPherson, Art Farmer, Kenny Dorham, Clark Terry, Webster Young, Art Blakey, Philly Joe Jones, Leroy Williams and Oscar Pettiford, as well as scores of others.

Upon joining the Four Freshmen Society in 1993, Rein brought the Freshmen over to Holland and, subsequently, twice more for sold-out performances (see new CD "FF Live In Holland" 2003).

A tireless worker for the cause of jazz, Rein is best known by his proud countrymen for bringing American jazz to the serious attention of Dutch music lovers, beginning over 30 years ago!

Prior to his concerts in Holland, Rein gives lectures on the history of the style of jazz that he and his trio (et al) are about to demonstrate during their performance. These now-famous, popular, and standing-room-only lectures (such as those at the Vredenburg Concert Hall in Utrecht) have earned him the affectionate nickname of "Professor Bop," bestowed by his adoring countrymen.

Reported to be one of the two best (living) bebop jazz pianists in the world, along with his friend and mentor Barry Harris (of NYC), one can hear these two giants on dual pianos on the CD entitled "Nostalgia" (Timeless Records, Holland). A list of his popular CDs can be viewed by typing "Rein de Graaff" onto Google on the internet.

We have been fortunate enough to hear him play for us, his special fans, 'after hours' at many of the FFS conventions, and we hope to enjoy his enormous talent for many years to come! Also, as proud FFSers, we hope to see HIS name under "acoustic piano" in the winners of the Downbeat Jazz Readers' Poll one of these days!

"Keep swingin' " Rein!



Rein de Graaff: „Nee, buiten de muziek zelf vond ik dat 'jazzleven' al snel nikes.”



BARRY HARRIS and REIN DE GRAAFF
at The Village Vanguard (NY)