

Jazz Café receives an A rating from an appreciative audience

■ *Southwestern singers team up with talented Grossmont group for an evening of tasty music*

BY LILIANA ANGUIANO
Arts Editor

Like birthdays and Santa Claus, the Southwestern College Jazz Café comes around once a year, leaving gifts for all good people in attendance.

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REVIEW

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SC's jazz ensemble West Coast Syncopation teamed with the Grossmont College Cadence Vocal

Jazz Ensemble for a double scoop of marvelous music.

SC counted in with a cheery rendition of "On the Sunny Side of the Street" that set the tone for the evening and invited the audience into the warm café of the imagination.

Vic Arreola took the torch with a soulful take on "It's Only a Paper Moon," a precursor to Xenia Odette and her sultry rendition of "I'm Getting Sentimental Over You." Odette conjured sweet nostalgia, a lovely reminder of unforgettable love.

Nerves were jangling some of the

CAFÉ: *Singers bring warmth, creativity to jazz standards*

younger singers, but Diane Amore was the embodiment of confidence as she romped through "Ain't Misbehavin'." Her mature and lively performance engaged the audience and elevated the mood.

West Coast Syncopation returned for a buoyant performance of "Shiny Stockings" highlighted by a brilliant scat solo by Dafne Acuña-Burgueño. It was evocative of the great scat singer Fitzgerald and a high point of the evening.

Joselyn Castillo and Adrian-Alfredo Llamas (introduced by director Tracy Burklund as Elvis) were crowd pleasers. As they crooned "Basin Street Blues," they gazed into each other's eyes and shared a captivating performance. An earthy scat by Llamas was more Louis Armstrong than Elvis, though he showed flashes of The King's shimmering charisma.

Haelie Snow, Karen Freeman, and Pablo Gamiño ended the first course of Jazz Café with the soaring classic



**ELLA
FITZGERALD**

Grossmont College's Cadence Vocal Jazz Ensemble haunted the café after intermission. CVJ was relaxed and confident as it poured into "Tea for Two" to re-caffeinate the audience.

Heather Salanga was graceful, sassy and full of feeling with "I'm Beginning to See the Light." Her scat performed was a crowd favorite, earning enthusiastic applause.

Christian Rodriguez, a guitarist in the Grossmont band, stepped to the mic with his axe for his

"Fly Me to the Moon." The rendition was so memorable audience members could be heard humming the tune as they left for intermission. There is no more organic musical tribute.

singing debut with "After You've Gone." He was double trouble with his strong voice and dexterous accompaniment.

"Dream a Little Dream of Me," in the hands of Esteban Soria, was somber and moody. Classically romantic, he sang with such commitment one could imagine he was thinking of someone special.

Eva Baffone said the standard "Honeysuckle Rose" made her feel "honored to sing." Her performance was fast and twisty, enticing listeners with a compelling spin on the melody.

In the generous spirit of jazz, SC and Grossmont shared the stage for a swipe at Fitzgerald fave "A-Tisket A-Tasket" that felt improvised but exciting. Sometimes the best jazz happens when artists and audience are not sure what's coming next.

Tracy Burklund's ensemble was, once again, classy and tuneful. Jazz Café gets five stars for its galaxy of twinkling lights.