CSUF News

Students Help Showcase Legendary Jazz Club
Campus Events Commemorate Keystone Korner's Legacy

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Three events celebrating a famous jazz club — a photo and oral history exhibition at Pollak Library, a concert at Meng Hall and this year’s Hansen Lecture — are helping to preserve the sights and sounds of a once-thriving jazz community.

In its heyday, Keystone Korner, which closed its doors in San Francisco’s North Beach neighborhood in 1983, became a West Coast jazz hub whose history has been captured by Kathy Sloane, a self-taught photographer and oral historian who has spent decades documenting San Francisco’s culture.

“I thought that as a documentary photographer and oral historian, what Kathy had to say about her work would be relevant to our students who are studying public history — that is, doing history in a public sense and engaging the public directly,” explained Benjamin Cawthra, associate professor of history and associate director of the Center for Oral and Public History.

Students in his "Seminar in Public History" and "Practicum in Public History" courses were involved in all aspects of the exhibition’s development and research — from meeting with Sloane early on and acting as curators to prepping the gallery.

Megan Marie Woods, who is pursuing her master’s degree in history, helped develop a design scheme for the exhibit. This opportunity helped her learn to work with others to "achieve something educational, historical and entertaining... I felt a huge responsibility on my shoulders, and finally felt like a graduate student because I created something, rather than just thought about it.

"If I learned anything during this process, it is that I will be one of many necessary parts within a whole at whichever museum I
end up working in one day,” she added. “This will be the highlight of earning my master’s here at Cal State Fullerton.”

The exhibition runs Feb. 11-March 24 at the Pollak Library’s Salz-Pollak Atrium Gallery, with a 4:30 p.m. opening reception on the first day. It includes Sloane’s photographs and oral histories, as well as artifacts from the club, a music listening station and an oral history station.

Sloane also will be the guest speaker at the Feb. 12 Hansen Lecture in Oral and Public History. “The Chosen Ones: Preserving and Expanding our History Through a Wider Lens” will be an illustrated lecture, discussing the connections between her documentary work and public history.

“A Night at Keystone Korner: Sound and Image Jazz Concert” Feb. 13 will see acclaimed jazz pianist and composer George Cables, himself a Keystone Korner alum and a visiting faculty member at Cal State Fullerton, join other Keystone habitués like trumpeter Eddie Henderson and bassist James Leary to celebrate the legacy of the jazz club. Also joining them will be Victor Lewis on drums and Billy Harper on tenor saxophone.

“It’s really fun to be able to collaborate across colleges — between Humanities & Social Sciences and the School of Music in the College of the Arts. We’re such a big campus that sometimes it’s hard to do it. It’s great for our students and great for the community,” said Canthia.

Sloane will sign copies of her book Keystone Korner: Portrait of a Jazz Club at all three events.

KEYSTONE KORNER EVENTS:

Keystone Korner: Portrait of a Jazz Club
Feb. 11-March 24; opening reception Wednesday, Feb. 11, 4:30 p.m.
Pollak Library’s Salz-Pollak Atrium Gallery

Hansen Lecture in Oral and Public History featuring Kathy Sloane
Thursday, Feb. 12, 5:30 p.m.
Titan Student Union

A Night at Keystone Korner: Sound and Image Jazz Concert
Friday, Feb. 13, 8 p.m.
Meng Concert Hall
Tickets are available online (http://www.fullerton.edu/arts/music/events.html).