

What's Happenin': Thursday, February 16, through Wednesday, February 29

Written by Mike Schulz

Tuesday, 14 February 2012 06:00

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Music

Maggie Brown

River Music Experience

Sunday, February 19, and Monday, February 20

The late, great Duke Ellington was quoted as saying, "By and large, jazz has always been like the kind of a man you wouldn't want your daughter to associate with." Let's be thankful, then, that this sentiment wasn't adopted by legendary composer Oscar Brown Jr., or the modern jazz scene – as River Music Experience patrons will soon realize – would've been deprived of one awfully gifted daughter.

Appearing locally on February 19 and 20, the soulful, Chicago-based jazz singer Maggie Brown will perform in two special events at the Davenport venue: as the featured musician and educator in Polyrythms' monthly Third Sunday Jazz series, and on Monday in Brown's touring

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showcase on the history of African-American songs titled "Legacy: Our Wealth of Music." As fans of her frequent Windy City gigs and her 2010 CD *From My Window* will attest, Brown brings emotional exuberance and subtle power to her renditions of classic jazz standards and pop favorites, and has earned numerous raves for her efforts. The

Chicago Tribune

's Howard Reich lauded "the interpretive depth of her work" and Brown's "uncommonly expressive alto," while the

Chicago Defender

's Earle Calloway called her "a phenomenal artist who has loads of individual style."

Yet while Brown has delivered impassioned takes on tunes by such disparate talents as Billie Holiday, Abbey Lincoln, Sade, and even Prince, critics agree that her most heartfelt performances are of compositions written by her father Oscar, who passed away in 2005, and whose output, as Reich describes, "remains as dramatically potent and socially relevant as when he penned them decades ago."

So plan on hearing a number of her father's signature works during Brown's RME appearances, because as the singer says, "I find myself in his music and lyrics It's really hard to walk away from Daddy's songs." I say the same thing whenever people catch me humming the German drinking song "Ein Prosit." *Man*, I wish Dad had a more varied repertoire.

On Sunday, Maggie Brown will lead a 3 p.m. jazz workshop and perform a 6 p.m. concert, and on Monday, she'll deliver performances of her one-woman educational entertainment at 11 a.m. and 1 p.m. For more information on Brown's area appearances, call (563)326-1333 or visit RiverMusicExperience.org

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