



Review: James Tormé

“With a name like Tormé, it has to be good!” And it was...in fact **it was fantastic!** Such a treat to see and hear this heir to his father’s seat as the foremost jazz singer of his time. If James keeps going, and I see no reason why he won’t, he will indeed be a star and fill those huge shoes left by his legendary father, Mel. I’m sure many who attend the concert came because of his famous father and were curious to see what young James had to offer. Well, he had a lot to offer: **a great voice and musical dexterity, fabulous personality and stage presence, and he’s extremely handsome to boot!**



James’ killer young band, featuring award winner, Danny Janklow on alto sax, was right up to James’ level of expertise. Opening with an upbeat Thelonious Monk blues, they showed what they were made of and had a chance to solo and stretch out before James came on stage. **But from the moment James appeared, he had the overflowing audience firmly in his extremely capable hands. His performance was absolutely riveting!** I found myself wanting to see what the other musicians were doing, but couldn’t take my eyes off of James when he was onstage.

Many of James’ renditions of standards like *Lullaby of Birdland*, *Too Close for Comfort*, & *Come Back to Me*, were basically Mel’s arrangements, but with a twist from James. He also did a few contemporary tunes like Stevie Wonder’s, *Looking in the Mirror*, made famous by Michael Jackson. It’s so refreshing to hear such a young singer scatting and putting his stamp on classic standards as well as choosing the best of what contemporary music has to offer.

Swinging at the Haven was a great vehicle for Danny Janklow and his sax. It’s easy to see why he was chosen as the top saxophone player at the North America Saxophone Alliance Competition in 2010. Pairing Janklow with bassist, Ryan Cross on the opener was delightful and pianist, Sam Barsh, with a mostly deadpan expression, let his capable fingers handle the emotions. Drummer, Robert Perkins who works with Michael Bublé, had a chance to shine on *Dat Dare*.

During the afternoon, Tormé made reference to his father and other terrific musicians who have recently passed. It was reassuring to note that although we have lost some great ones, we have wonderful, young musicians like those we heard that afternoon to keep Jazz, our national treasure, alive.