

THE JARRETT CHERNER TRIO AT LA VE LEE

By Patricia Albela

The Jarrett Cherner Trio performed at La Ve Lee last September, on its first West-Coast tour. Cherner, a young pianist/composer of extraordinary talent, led his superb trio through a unique Latin/World-tinged take on the jazz piano tradition.

With a repertoire of mostly originals that won Cherner an ASCAP Young Composer Award, the trio, which sprouted from the Boston jazz scene, has been attracting audiences with its debut CD <it *Burgeoning* it>.

The charismatic Cherner was joined by two highly creative musicians, both East-Coast-based Peruvians, well-versed in jazz and world rhythms: bassist Jorge Roeder contributed excellence, solidity, and warmth on his acoustic. His solos and occasional use of the bow were masterful. Drummer/percussionist Jorge Perez-Albela brought energy, sensitivity and an exciting rhythmic arsenal. He played off and built from his band mates' ideas, and challenged them with his own. The interactions were rich in dynamics, inventive interplay, and stimulating counterpoint. The result was surprising, vibrant, adventurous, and highly groovin' music.

Cherner's interesting harmonics and percussive style were striking from the opening "Theme." Next came "Untitled," an ostinato-driven piece with teasing breaks, and "New Tune in A Major 7," a moody funk ballad. The trio swung bebop-style in Powell's "Bouncing with Bud," then quieted down in the dazzling "Burgeoning." But things heated up in the 6/8 festejo rendition of Parker's "Billie's Bounce," carried by Roeder and Perez-Albela's Afro-Peruvian skills. Perez-Albela played drum set and cajon at once (one hand in each), and alternated from one to the other with an entrancing effect. Then came the spellbinding bossa nova "Somebody Quietly." In the Middle-Eastern-hued "Alone Together" the musicians created a groove by repetition of rhythms and melodic lines. Here Perez-Albela used rattle bells, and a pandeiro on the snare drum. Roeder led the group into the 7/4 gem "Shake the Cage" (an NPR pick for All Songs Considered's web showcase for self-produced, independent artists), which featured Cherner's solo over Perez-Albela's triangle beats. The night ended with "Sucker Punch," a composition loaded with spirit and attitude.

The trio continued its performance schedule in San Francisco, where Cherner now resides.