

NEWS

JAZZ EVENING AT PIZZA ON THE PARK



Left to right: pianist John Pierce, Colin Oxley, Simon Thorpe and Nigel Tully, Chairman of the Musicians' Jazz Committee

Assistant Terry Pamplin writes: A highlight of the Company's year is the jazz evening at London's Pizza on the Park, the music provided by the year's award-winning young jazz musician accompanied by performers of his or her choice.

The Jazz Award was established by Jeffrey Lockett in 1991, and the Company's Bronze Award is made annually to the most

outstanding and "exceptionally talented" player at the Company's jazz evening earlier in the year.

This year's winner was the immensely popular drummer Steve Brown, who not only won the ballot for the award by a considerable margin but also his audience. His dual talent for playing superbly creative jazz and for communicating enthusiasm to his listeners is rare.

At Pizza on the Park, the music chosen by Steve was played by The Steve Brown Quartet, comprising Colin Oxley (guitar), John Pierce (piano) and Simon Thorpe (bass), with of course Steve on drums.

The programme, in the music room where many of the world's greatest jazz players have performed (George Shearing, Cleo Lane and John Dankworth to name but three) was introduced by Nigel Tully, the chairman of the Jazz Committee. The band achieved instant rapport and was swinging from the

first bar – not surprising with Steve in the engine-room and a driving bass player with the talent of Simon Thorpe. Simon can be heard regularly with the Stacey Kent Band and the Bobby Wellins Quartet.

It was a pleasure reminiscent of Tal Farlow or Barney Kessel to hear a group featuring solo guitar, with on this occasion the honours shared with the piano. Guitarist Colin Oxley, an alumnus and tutor of the Guildhall, performed a number of beautifully voiced solos as well as contributing to the swinging rhythm section. On piano, the sensitive and innovative touch of John Pierce is born of the great experience of playing with such names as Peggy Lee, Art Farmer and Anita O'Day.

The Steve Brown Quartet delivered an evening to remember, and this most popular event in the Company's calendar should be underlined in everyone's diary for next year!



Senior Warden Sir Alan Traill with Jazz Award winner, drummer Steve Brown

THE APRIL COURT DINNER



Clockwise from top centre: Sir David Willcocks receives the Company's Silver Medal from the Master, Professor Malcolm Troup; Pastmaster Antony Rubinstein is awarded the Silver Medal for exceptional service to the Company; Alexander Sitkovetsky; and Richard Sotnick, who received 1999's Walter Willson Cobbett Medal for services to chamber music