



The "Nashville Sound": A guide to live music

By Shirley Hallblade

The Pub of Love is just one of the places to try

Nashville IS "Music City, USA." And a visit to Nashville for the ACRL 8th National Conference, April 11-14, is not complete without taking advantage of some of the many opportunities to hear live music.

One can hear everything from country, jazz, and rock 'n roll to gospel, blues and classical. While Nashville's musical roots in country and bluegrass are evident, almost every other form of music can be found within a few short blocks in the downtown area.

There are a host of gathering spots for both stars and up-and-coming stars. With the recording industry a dominant local business, scores of backup and studio musicians perform in clubs in and around Nashville. Live performing venues regularly feature songwriters' nights, acoustic jam sessions, and showcase events presenting new talent or celebrating just-released albums. Some clubs invite audiences for live TV or video tapings.

This article highlights some of the featured venues and scheduled musical events which may be of interest to conference attendees. To obtain the latest information on what's happening and who's playing where, check out the various local publications upon arrival in Nashville. The *Nashville Scene* (Wednesdays), the *Tennessean* (mornings and Sundays), the *Nashville Banner* (weekday afternoons), and the *Music City Entertainment Guide* (weekly), provide comprehensive entertainment listings. It is also a good idea to check the papers and radio stations for spe-

cial concerts that come up on short notice. In Music City, you never know when a hot jam session will break out or a special benefit or showcase concert will be put together.

Country music and line-dancing

Nashville's nightlife is famous the world over, and the club scene offers venues for a variety of musical tastes. The **Wildhorse Saloon** located in The District (120 Second Avenue No.), a massive country dance club and television studio, will be the site of the all-conference reception on Sunday evening, April 12. This popular club is open both day and evening for music, line-dancing, and dining. The **Stock Yard Restaurant's Bull Pen Lounge** (901 Second Ave. No.) is a country music club located a little north of downtown where two-steppers can dance to live music.

Blues, jazz, and R&B

The new **B. B. King's Blues Club** on lower Broadway in The District and the **Bourbon Street Blues and Boogie Bar** located in



Tootsie's Wild Orchid Lounge.

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Printer's Alley offer great rhythm and blues music and dining. The **3rd & Lindsley Bar and Grill** (818 Third Ave. So.) and **Windows on the Cumberland** (112 Second Ave.) also feature live blues and R&B. **Caffe Milano** (176 Third Ave. No.) promotes jazz and blues through its popular shows featuring both local and national performers.

Pop, rock, and various

The **Ace of Clubs** (114 Second Ave. So.) and **Club Mere Bulles** (152 Second Ave. No.) feature music with a popular beat. The Ace of Clubs also offers rock 'n roll which dominates at the **Exit/In** at 2208 Elliston Place. Music of all styles can be heard at popular gathering places such as **12th & Porter** (114 12th Ave. No.), **328 Performance Hall** (328 Fourth Ave. So.), **Douglas Corner Cafe** (2106 Eighth Ave. So.), and the **Pub of Love** (123 12th Ave. No.). The **Music City Mix Factory** (300 Second Ave. So.) offers five floors of entertainment, each featuring a different type of music.

Acoustic and folk

More intimate settings provide the backdrop for performers at **Barbara's** in Printer's Alley and at the famed **Bluebird Cafe** (4140 Hillsboro Road away from downtown in an area called

Green Hills). At the **Bluebird**, country, blues, and other kinds of musicians perform original material on the small stage. Stars such as Garth Brooks and Bonnie Raitt paid their dues at the **Bluebird**.

Henry's Coffeehouse, located at Broadway downtown, offers a venue for acoustic music of various types. Popular "in-the-round" shows by artists who perform their own songs can be enjoyed in this cozy setting.

Bluegrass and more country

Bluegrass fans will have their fill at the **Station Inn** (402 12th Ave. So.). Live acoustic bluegrass music is featured Tuesday through Sunday with a no-cover open bluegrass jam session on Sunday nights.

Any self-respecting nightclub crawl in Nashville includes a stop by **Tootsie's Orchid Lounge** (422 Broadway). The unabashedly lavender landmark, which backs up to the Ryman Auditorium, has been a Music City watering hole for decades. In its heyday, proprietress Tootsie Bess offered a safe haven and a hot meal to young Opry stars and music industry hopefuls who would slip over from the Ryman where the Grand Ole Opry began. **Robert's Western World** (416 Broadway), also known as **Three Doors Down** (from Tootsie's), features live country/western music, dancing, and interesting characters.

Of course, we can't forget the **Grand Ole Opry** itself, now located in the Opryland, USA complex east of the city near the airport. The world's longest-running live radio program is broadcast from that location every Friday and Saturday night. Performances are made up of acts from each year's Opry roster and their invited guests. Schedules are not determined until midweek; weekend newspapers will publish the schedules. A planned tour option to an Opry show is offered conference attendees; individual tickets can be purchased as well through Opryland USA [(615) 889-6611].

Music Valley Village Area

Away from downtown, but worth a trip, are two new musical venues located on Music Valley Drive across from the Opryland Hotel.

The **Texas Troubadour Theatre** (2416 Music Valley Drive) is the permanent home of the no-cover Ernest Tubbs Record Shop Mid-night Jamboree on Saturday nights. This theater has also been a regular venue for Kitty Wells, Johnny Wright, and Johnny Russell.

Nashville registration deadline near

March 7 is the deadline for advance registration for ACRL's 8th National Conference in Nashville, April 11-14, 1997. The conference will offer more than 175 sessions on the theme "Choosing Our Futures." Author and Harvard professor Cornel West will be the keynote speaker. He is well known for his book *Race Matters*, which was a bestseller in 1993. Eli Noam, professor at Columbia University, and Alan Guskin, chancellor of Antioch University, will examine the future of higher education. More than 250 exhibitors will share the latest in products and services.

Registration materials have been mailed and are available on ACRL's homepage at <http://www.ala.org/acrl.html>. Fees are \$270 for ACRL personal members; \$330 for ALA personal members; \$420 for nonmembers; and \$114 for full-time library school students.

Also relatively new is the **Stardust Theatre** (also at 2416 Music Valley Drive) where Boots Randolph ("Mr. Yakkety Sax") and Danny Davis & the Nashville Brass perform. These versatile and veteran entertainers perform country, jazz, big band, and pop music.

Classical

For classical music lovers, three scheduled performances will occur during the time that conference visitors are in Nashville.

The Nashville Symphony, as part of its Pops Series, performs with guest artist Burt Bacharach in Jackson Hall of the **Tennessee Performing Arts Center** in 8:00 p.m. concerts on April 11 and 12. For ticket information contact Ticketmaster at (615) 255-9600.

The **Ryman Auditorium** (116 Fifth Ave. No.), as part of its Classical Concert Series, fea-



The Nashville Symphony.

tures the Orpheus Chamber Orchestra on Friday evening, April 11. Ticket information can be obtained by calling (615) 889-6611.

On Saturday, April 12, at 8:00 p.m. the Stuttgart Chamber Orchestra performs at the Tennessee Performing Arts Center's Polk Theater. For ticket information call Ticketmaster at (615) 255-9600.

And still more

There are many more clubs, restaurants, bars, and concert venues offering visitors a rich musical offering. Those listed here are well-known and/or

favorite places and offer only a starting point for the music lover. The Local Arrangements Committee hopes visitors to the ACRL National Conference in April will check out the Nashville music scene and experience first-hand some of what Music City has to offer. ■

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