

George Van Eps & Barry Zweig  
at Restaurant Kikuya, Huntington Beach, CA

By Floyd Levin, JUST JAZZ GUITAR (Nov. 1997)

Jazz legend George Van Eps made a rare appearance on June 19 as part of Jack Wood's Thursday Night Jazz Series at Restaurant Kikuya. Barry Zweig nimbly shared the guitar chores with Van Eps. Drummer Jay Lacaire merged with leader Luther Hughes on string bass to bolster the tasteful subtle rhythm.

Van Eps, still facile and fascinating at 84, grinned broadly while *The Man I Love* simmered gently as he caressed the seven strings on the instrument he invented in 1938. In eye-to-eye contact with Zweig, their unison improvisations triggered mid chorus applause from the capacity crowd in the spacious lounge.

Van Eps, seated with stoic calmness, played moving almost pianistic lines. Contrastingly, Zweig, rocking in joyous animation on the edge of his seat, supported his colleague rhythmically or switched to assertive soloing. His *Falling In Love With Love* was applauded loudly by George Van Eps.

The consummate pair of string artists, although separated in age by several generations, created jazz with a majestic chamber music spirit that bristled on the up tempos and throbbed on the ballads. Van Eps, prodded by Luther Hughes' astute inquiries, reminisced about his relationship with the great composer, George Gershwin. During the evening, Van Eps was presented with the American Federation of Jazz Societies annual Benny Carter Award for his outstanding contribution to jazz.