

Pianist Monty Alexander performed his special brand of jazz and touted his new release at a recent five-day engagement at the Jazz Standard on E. 27th St. in Manhattan.

His recently released Telarc International album, "Go-in' Yard," is a live album featuring a band of some of Jamaica's finest musicians — including bassist Glen Browne, guitarists Robert Browne and Wayne Armond, drummer Desmond Jones, keyboardist Dwight Dawes and hand drummer Robert Thomas.

Alexander has worked with jazz greats such as Milt Jackson, bassist Ray Brown, Dizzy Gillespie, Clark Terry, Sonny Rollins and Quincy Jones, but he has a deep reservoir of musical genres and experience. A solid jazz background, gospel sounds and, of course, Caribbean rhythms are part of the Monty Alexander style.

He opened the set with his composition "Renewal." Beginning with a carefully controlled fluttering of the piano keys, Alexander's sound became fuller as it was joined by sideman Mark Taylor on drums and Hassan Shakur on bass.

Throughout the show, the trio was exceptionally tight and entertaining.

And the Kingston, Jamaica-born musician is very much in touch with his Caribbean roots in the trio's rendition of Bob Marley's "Is This Love?" from Alexander's "Stir It Up: The Music of Bob Marley."

The pianist also collaborated with reggae's dynamic duo — drummer Sly Dunbar and bassist Robbie Shakespeare — on the "Monty Meets Sly and Robbie" album on Telarc. Alexander is an extraordinary talent; his shows are special. He's a must-see when he comes to town.

Group to honor excellence

The Mid-Brooklyn Civic Association is holding its "Professional Excellence Commitment to the Community Awards" reception today at the Brooklyn Museum of Art at 6:30 p.m.

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