



MONTY ALEXANDER

Jazz Pianist Expresses Self At China Club

"The foremost thing in my mind is the rhythm. I play what I think is best at that time. It's all spontaneous. That's what makes jazz—there's no place for mechanics."

Nineteen Monty Alexander, who has been playing piano since he was four, has his own theories on jazz interpretation.

He executes these theories playing with the Phil Arabia Trio on weekend nights in sessions at the New China Club. And he's described by local musicians as "one of the best jazz pianists to hit this area."

Monty's regular job is playing bass with the Tony Martini group at the Golden Hotel.

"I started playing piano at four, just picking out things myself. But I took formal lessons from the time I was 7 until I was 15. I must have had 100 different teachers. The reason for so many was they got sick of me—because I wouldn't do what I was told. And I wouldn't practice much."

"I like to play with a combo of piano, bass and drums in preference to a big band. There's more freedom of expression with a small group."

Working with the Phil Arabia Trio at the China Club, Monte has full range of expression—and takes full advantage.