

'VILLAGE' IS SCENE OF JAZZ CONCERT

**Billie Holiday and Modern
Quartet Head Program at
Loew's Sheridan Theatre**

Jazz concerts successfully invaded new territory at midnight Saturday when 2,500 people packed Loew's Sheridan Theatre in Greenwich Village to hear a program headed by Billie Holiday and the Modern Jazz Quartet.

Miss Holiday, making one of her rare New York appearances, was not always in full control of her voice. But once she had worked away a tendency toward thickness and lumpiness, she sang with a quiet passion that was deeply moving.

She reached her peak on three of her established favorites, "God Bless the Child," "Don't Explain" and particularly on "Billie's Blues," a song that was delivered with raucous gaiety in her early days but now has evolved into a dark-shadowed, brooding plaint.

The Modern Jazz Quartet was impeccable in every sense, as is the group's wont, and genteel to such a degree that the thread of jazz quality that normally runs through most of its work all but unraveled completely from time to time.

Two selections written by the Quartet's leader, John Lewis, for a French film, "One Never Knows," were extremely thin as jazz but the group showed that it had not lost the touch when it turned with assurance and feeling to that basic branch of jazz, the blues, on "Bag's Groove" and "Bluesology."

Mingus Quintet Heard

The earlier portions of the program were often adventurous without being especially provocative. After the Charlie Mingus Quintet had given a delightfully floating performance of a pleasant wisp of minor melody, "Reincarnation of a Love Bird," the group tied itself into knots on "Tia Juana Table Dance." This was a long series of tortured and frantic instrumental sounds leading to the entrance of a flamenco dancer who was soon Lindy Hopping as she clicked her castanets.

Mr. Mingus followed this with a selection called "The Clown," in which a speaking voice improvised on a theme while the instruments were doing likewise. Unfortunately neither the speaker—Jean Shepherd, who served as master of ceremonies for the program—nor the instrumentalists were able to improvise anything particularly interesting.

A much more successful adventure was undertaken by Art Taylor, drummer in the Randy Weston Trio, which opened the evening. Mr. Taylor essayed a deft and amusing jazz drum solo in waltz time on "Little Niles," a charming little melody written by Mr. Weston.

However, its charms were not quite enough to withstand an extension of variations on it that went on for seventeen minutes. Nor were the charms of Barbara Lea, a singer who completed the program, enough to overcome the fact that she found herself singing with only a slightly rehearsed pianist for accompaniment instead of the full rhythm section needed to support and swing her slight, earthbound voice.

J. S. W.