

Singer's emotive style wins peer approval at Starlight

Kay Bourne

Few audiences are more appreciative than a gathering of an artist's peers. So it was that vocalist Lee Genesis got an enthusiastic response at the Starlight Roof, July 19, from a crowd that included many personages on the Boston jazz scene. And their ardent response to the singer's performance was warranted.

Vocally, Genesis was in top condition, able to dance up and down the scale or hold notes as the spirit moved him. He is an emotional singer. Nature has generously endowed him with the vocal equipment to display an abundance of feeling. He moves easily from gospel to pop to jazz, whatever style of phrasing will deliver the message he intends.

It is this very creativity with a song that wins Genesis the adoration of other musicians. One never knows ahead of time what program he may offer or even after

the introductory phrases, exactly where he'll take a tune.

Among the jazz notables drawn to the Kenmore Square night spot for Genesis' appearance were composer pianist George Russell, jazz radio deejay Eric Jackson, and owner of the now shuttered Jazz Workshop Freddie Taylor.

Genesis offered an appealing opening set of two original songs "Evil Dream" and "You Make Me Happy!" a song by Boston composer Delmar Brown, "The Farther We See," and "Someday We'll All Be Free."

Co-headliner for the evening was popular Boston jazz stylist Wanetta Jackson. A strong voice, Jackson employs a gospel fervor in her interpretations that endows a song with unexpected muscle. And if the wistful quality is lost in standards like "Summertime" or "A Song For You," there is a gain in the beauty of the notes resounding utterly true.



She is still forming a stage persona, but Jackson holds the promise of evolving into a star performer.

Both singers were ably accompanied by a trio of outstanding Boston instrumentalists: Tim Ingles on bass, Siphonene on drums, and Frank

Wilkins on piano. The latter started the evening on a high note with a charmingly complex interpretation of "Here And Now."

The Starlight Roof date was a return to Boston for Lee Genesis who has been living and working in New York for

better than seven years. He came to Boston in the early 70s with a lead role in the stage show "Gospel" and stayed in the area for several years, among other musical activities forming the popular band Heat. He can be heard on the lp "The George Russell Band" at The Village Vanguard" on Soul Note Records as the feature singer on "God Bless The Child" and "Bi City Blues." Wanetta Jackson was one of Genesis' backup singers in the early dates with Hear.