

Guitarist blends rock, jazz into dynamic show

Michelle Hoffman

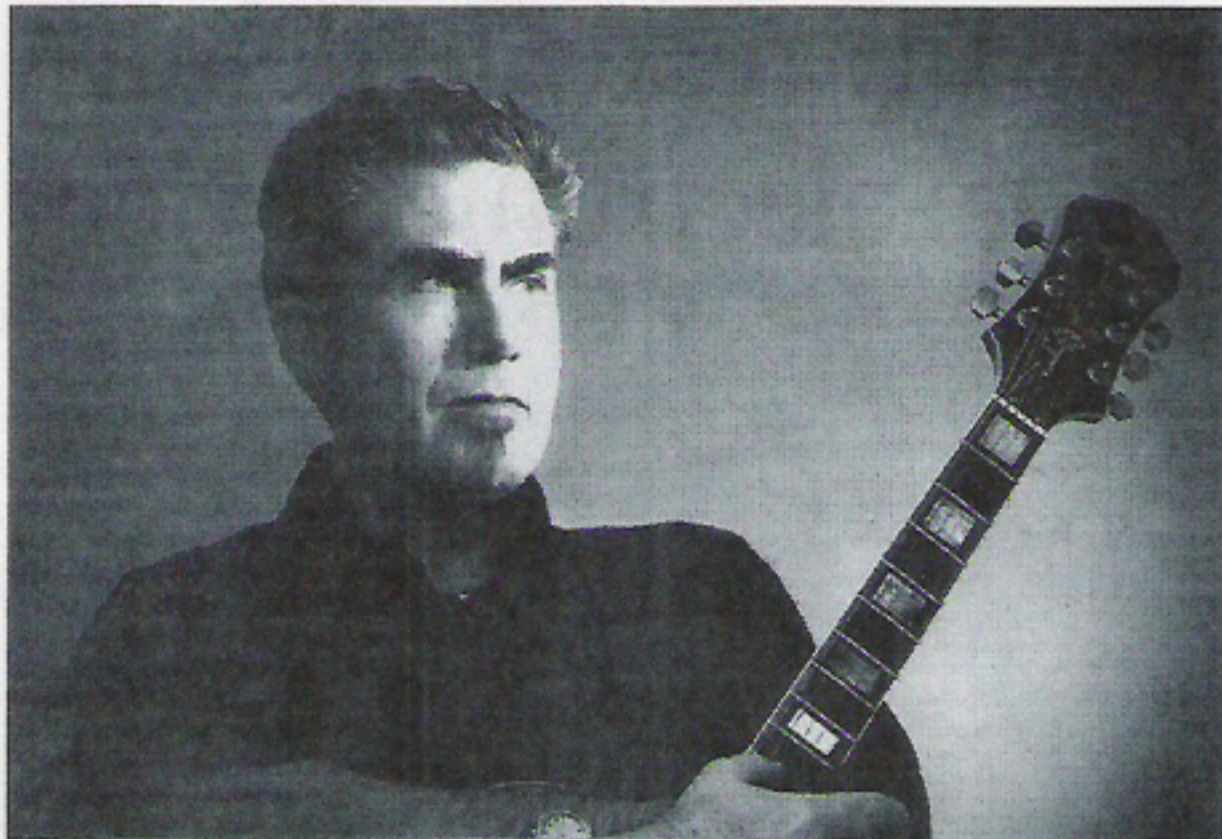
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SCOTTSDALE

Not even full-fledged jazz musicians who came of age in the rock-addled 1960s can escape that era's musical influence.

Jazz guitarist Stan Sorenson likes to combine the two musical genres of rock and jazz. You can hear for yourself Sunday evenings at Tapino Kitchen and Wine Bar in Scottsdale, where his eclectic style is the musical attraction.



GINA GENNARO

Jazz guitarist Stan Sorenson plays instrumental jazz versions of tunes you wouldn't expect during his Sunday evening shows at Tapino Kitchen and Wine Bar.

Sorenson says his stuff is instrumental jazz versions of tunes you wouldn't expect.

"I might do a medley of *Over the Hills and Far Away* by Led Zeppelin, Green Day's *Good Riddance (Time of Your Life)*, and *Blackbird* by the Beatles," he said.

The first album he ever bought was a Jimi Hendrix album, and it influenced Sorenson early on.

Hendrix and jazz? Not so far-fetched, according to Sorenson.

"Hendrix had a deep blues background," he said. "His stuff was closely related to jazz because of the improvisation. He was so creative with the sounds he got out of his guitar. He turned feedback into music."

related

Stan Sorenson

What: Live jazz.

Where: Tapino Kitchen and Wine Bar, 7000 E. Shea Blvd., Scottsdale.

When: 9 p.m.-midnight Sundays.

Information: (480) 991-6887.

With almost five decades of playing behind him, Sorenson, a native of Phoenix, picked up the guitar when he was 8 and quickly made a career of it. At 15, he got his first paying gig with the polka group Clinton Due and the Lamplighters.

Bent on being a musician, Sorenson turned down an engineering scholarship to Arizona State University, opting instead to study music at Phoenix College. A testament to his skill and passion, the work has been steady ever since. "I've always been able to make a living and pay my bills," he said.

Sorenson has performed jazz all over the Valley and beyond, including Johnny's Uptown in Phoenix, the Mesa Arts Center, Gammage Auditorium, Sedona's Jazz on the Rocks, and as far away as the Netherlands.

On Sunday evenings at Tapino, Sorenson performs for the bar crowd in front of a double-sided glass cabinet. Layered with wine bottles that gleam like gemstones, the oscillating structure divides the dining area and the bar. It's a thing of beauty in and of itself.

But the patio, dubbed the Vino Room, is like something out of a dream sequence. It's as if Eros himself had a hand in its design. The open terrace is shrouded in white linen curtains that billow in the evening breeze. Cloth stretches across the ceiling where red lights glow underneath like garnets. White couches and white coffee tables sit atop the crimson floor, and Sorenson's music is pumped onto the patio via amplifier.

Tapino (a marriage of the words tapas and vino) boasts a 125-bottle wine list and menu items like pancetta-wrapped Gorgonzola-stuffed dates (\$6) and lump crab cakes (\$10). Ever had a lobster corn dog (\$9)?

The entire experience might be enough to make you want to quit that work thing and take off for an adventure in España.

Or you could just hang at Tapino, rinsed in Sorenson's music, and daydream about it.

"Jazz is not as inaccessible as people think," he said, just before beginning his set that includes a Thelonious Monk-inspired version of *Santa Claus Is Coming To Town* and Wes Montgomery's *Sundown*. "It's really fun to play here and interact with the people."

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