

On Harry's "To See You" tour, we all had the privilege of watching and hearing one of the finest young jazz drummers in the music world. We asked Arthur "Bam Bam" Latin to tell us about that fateful night. . .

## ...When Arthur met Harry

In His Own Words - Arthur "Bam Bam" Latin

**F**or as long as I can remember, Monday has always been the one day of the week with the least amount of excitement. I mean, who looks forward to Monday? Absolutely no one!! One songwriter even went as far as to call it "Stormy Monday." I personally believe that Mondays are not bad. In fact, one of the greatest events in my life happened on a Monday. Let me explain.

The day was Monday and the place was Cedar Street Club in Austin, Texas. I was performing with the Elias Haslinger Septet as a fillin drummer. The usual drummer for the group was out of town that night. I had no idea that accepting this gig would change the course of my life. We were playing the fourth song of the first set as I looked into the audience. It was the usual slow Monday night club scene with few people scattered about. Somewhere between the first and fourth songs, one of the world's finest musicians and actors had mysteriously entered the club without me noticing. All I remember hearing is "We have a very special guest in the club tonight. Please welcome to the stage Harry Connick, Jr." It was at that moment that my life began to change fast.

For starters, my heart began beating in double time. Despite this technical difficulty my heart was experiencing, I tried to remain cool as Harry jumped down to the stage on the side of the drums. He walked over to the piano and we began to play. . . .Oops! I mean, we began to swing!!! That is the only way to describe it. To be completely honest, it seemed as if the entire mood of the club changed instantly. Most people stopped talking and began to listen and enjoy the music. I saw toes tapping and fingers snapping. Everybody in the band

was swingin'. Man, it was a great feeling.

After we finished the first set, I was able to talk to Harry during the break. Now, before this whole event occurred, I was a fan of Harry's music but, after our conversation, I



knew I had just made a new friend. A friend who shares the same love of good music. Good music is like air: I need it to breathe! Harry made a comment to me that I remember that best describes why I went on to play in his band. He said "When rock music or country music or R&B music comes on the speakers, notice how people start to move and enjoy the music. But when Jazz comes on people stop moving and

start back talking. . . .That should not be. If the Jazz music is really swinging, then people are going to listen and they can't help but move."

As a drummer, one of my greatest tasks is making the band swing and groove so hard that people can't stop their feet from moving. With that in mind, two weeks later I saw Harry at the club again. He told me of his plans to record a new ballad album, and he asked me if I felt comfortable playing with brushes. Well, I now know why he asked and, to make a long story short, I was in Capitol Studios playing brushes on 90 percent of Harry's new ballad album.

It was one of the best experiences of my life. I guess I was at the right place at the right time. So now I can say with confidence, "Harry, you were right. Our gifts do make a way for us. You're the greatest and thanks for such a wonderful opportunity!!!" And, for all you people who hate Mondays remember, they are not so bad. I know.