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Jones and Lee are jazzy

By SAM McINTOSH

The concert by Oliver Jones and Ranee Lee at the Grande Theatre de Quebec on Saturday evening April 1 was superb. Aply backed by Eric Lagacé, bassist, and Jim Doxas on drums, they produced a musical evening to remember.

Oliver Jones, a classically trained pianist, has been playing jazz for over 50 years in Montreal, Canada, and the world.

Although his mentor Oscar Peterson has gained more popular acclaim, Oliver Jones has been recognized as an outstanding pianist and composer by all jazz fans. He announced his retirement recently with much fanfare but, after a recording session with Ranee, he decided that

the announcement was premature and embarked on this tour to once again thrill his fans with his incredible music and technique. This evening proved that he was indeed far from being a retiree!

Ranee Lee has to be one of the world's best jazz vocalists. She has been based in Canada for over 30 years and during this time has developed her own unique style and has proven her worth as a teacher of jazz at McGill University. At the beginning of her career, she was identified as being in the mould of the great Billie Holiday but she clearly demonstrated at this concert that she has broken this mould and exploded into her own style. Her stage presence was amazing whether she was singing or

simply standing swaying to the music.

This was my first experience of an audience giving a standing ovation to performers during the performance rather than at the end of it. All I can say is that it was well deserved. This is also my first experience in writing a concert review and I am doing so simply to reflect the pleasure that this concert gave to me. While there were several solos, it was clear that each individual was supported by all the others and the blending of their skills was really one of the evening's highlights

While there are no other concerts planned in Quebec, there are some to come near this city (Thetford Mines, Domaine Forget) and you can find their full tour schedule at <www.justin-time.com/authors/oliver-jones>.