

William "Count" Basie to perform

January 18, 1980

Ella Fitzgerald, Frank Sinatra, Tony Bennett and Fred Astaire number among his biggest fans. He was invited to play at John F. Kennedy's inaugural ball in 1961, and he gave a command performance for the queen of England in 1966. He has received innumerable honors and accolades, and after more than 40 years in the music business, he still plays to packed houses all over the world.

He is William "Count" Basie, and he'll be performing at the University of California, San Diego at 8 p.m. Wednesday, Feb. 6, in the Mandeville Auditorium. Tickets cost \$8 for general admission; \$6.50 for students and UC San Diego faculty and staff, and \$4.50 for UC San Diego students. Tickets are available at the UCSD Central Box Office, 452-4559.

Basie, 75, took piano lessons as a youngster in Red Bank, New Jersey. In the early 1920s, he moved to Harlem, developing his art in the clubs where Lucky Roberts, Willie "The Lion" Smith and Thomas "Fats" Waller played.

While touring the country on the major vaudeville circuit for black entertainers, Basie became stranded in Kansas City, where he joined Bennie Moten's jazz band. When Moten died in 1935, Basie became the leader of the band which today is known as the Count Basie Orchestra. He moved the band to New York City shortly after Moten's death, and since then has enjoyed continuous success as a pianist, bandleader and recording artist.

The concert is sponsored by the Black Cultural Arts Program and the University Events Office.

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