



## Guitarists Gather To Fete Farlow

September 1996

By Herb Boyd

NEW YORK CITY – A late-June 75<sup>th</sup>-birthday tribute to guitarist Tal Farlow witnessed a parade of admirers, most of them bearing guitars and tuneful praise for a “musician who occupies the highest plateau of our esteem.”

So said Johnny Smith, a guitarist famous for his version of “Moonlight In Vermont,” who attended the event at Merkin Concert Hall. Sponsored by the JVC Jazz Festival and produced by Charles Carlini, the evening’s program included such other notable six-stringers as Herb Ellis, Gene Bertoncini, Attila Zoller, Joe Diorio, Jack Wilkins, Joe Puma, and John Abercrombie in performance salutes to the master. BMI’s Burt Korall played host.

Bertoncini and Diorio were particularly memorable in their duet of “The Shadow of Your Smile.” Drummers Winard Harper and Terry Clarke and bassists Dwayne Burno and Rufus Reid took turns accompanying the guitarists.

Between shows and at the end of the night, Farlow displayed his awesome chops. He and fellow-guitarist Mark Elf were a splendid tandem on “Fascinating Rhythm,” as Farlow’s big hands spread across four frets of his guitar, eliciting choruses of expressive tones. “I really don’t deserve such a tribute,” he said. The musicians gathered in his honor thought otherwise.