

# Style Plus

## *Prysm's Reflections on Ellington*

Prysm, a trio of French composer-musicians, grooved through a confident mix of fluid jazz Monday evening at the French Embassy's Maison Francaise. "Fete de la Musique," a tribute to Duke Ellington and celebration of the summer solstice, also featured jazz artists from Austria, Luxembourg and Finland.

Leading off the shortest night's long program were two Finns—Carita Holmstrom and Teppo Hauta-aho. Their folk guitar and bass might have sounded better without the amplifier that kicked in on their

second number. "Don't Get Around Much Anymore" took on an almost lilting air sung in Finnish sibilants, and Holmstrom's cover of "Norwegian Wood" featured scat acrobatics and heated yodeling.

Prysm offered thoughtful and complex compositions by pianist Pierre de Bethmann, drummer Benjamin Henocq and Christophe Wallemme, who plays double bass. "Angel Voice," by Wallemme, suggested a buoyancy not usually found in dark bass-and-drum musings. Henocq's piece "The Circle"

alternated explosive keyboard runs with carefully plotted and restrained piano lines.

Trumpeter Gast Waltzing and his quartet from Luxembourg ripped through straight-up jazz numbers, including "Nothing Personal" and a composition of his own, "After Love." The World Beat Jazz Quartet led by Karoline Strassmayer, who played alto and soprano saxophones, polished off the evening with a round of undulating mambo rhythms. Her limpid phrasing in "Prelude to a Kiss" paid homage to Ellington and his saxophonist Johnny Hodges.

—L. Peat O'Neil