

Freddy Cole



Freddy Cole, the legacy of his brother Nat “King” Cole, will stir up memories that will never be forgotten. Now in his 40th year of performing, this great singer and pianist has developed a huge following of his own. The instantly recognizable Cole voice and a veteran quartet, play the classics as well as new compositions and interpretations from a huge repertoire.

Lionel Frederick Cole was born on October 15, 1931, the youngest of Edward and Paulina Nancy Cole’s five children. His three elder brothers, Eddie, Ike and Nat (12 years Freddy’s senior) were all musicians. “I started playing piano at five or six,” Freddy remembers. “Music was all around me.” In the Chicago home of his

youth, visitors included Duke Ellington, Count Basie and Lionel Hampton.

Cole moved to New York in 1951, where he studied at the Juillard School of Music and found himself profoundly influenced by John Lewis, Oscar Peterson and Teddy Wilson. He received a master’s degree from the New England Conservatory of Music and then spent several months on the road as a member of an Earl Bostic band that also included Johnny Coles and Benny Golson.

It was back in New York that Cole successfully laid the groundwork for a career that continues to flourish to this day. He developed a vast repertoire of songs in Manhattan bistros and concurrently began to supplement his live performances with television and radio commercial jingle work.

Cole doesn’t apologize for sounding like his brother, Nat “King” Cole. There are certain unmistakable similarities. He plays piano and sings, and performs live with guitar and upright bass, just like Nat. Yet his voice is raspier, smokier, jazzier even. But he has emerged from the awesome shadow cast by his elder brother. In truth, his phrasing is far closer to that of Frank Sinatra or Billie Holiday than that of his brother and his timing swings a little more. His vocals – suave, elegant, formidable and articulate – are among the most respected in jazz.

“He’s one of the few male jazz singers these days who is still at the height of his powers and can be taken seriously.”

Ben Ratliff
The New York Times

“If you quiet your thoughts and really listen, Freddy Cole will open the door to your heart with a key you did not even know existed.”

Ruth Brown
Blues Singer

“Freddy Cole just might be the most attractively understated jazz singer currently at work.”

Lloyd Sachs
Chicago Sun-Times

Grammy Nomination 2001
Best Jazz Vocal Album
Merry Go Round (Telarc)

Agency

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