From the Home of Hitsville, U.S.A., Give It Up for... Jazz!

By NATE CHINEN

Detroit has always been an underdog among America's jazz cities, but it has turned out more than its share of major jazz musicians. Their legacy, irreducible to a single sound or style, was the impetus for Motor City Jazz, a concert presented Thursday through Saturday at Frederick P. Rose Hall.

Friday night's show was split in two: a Lincoln Center Jazz Orchestra performance and a looser all-star combo set. The music throughout was by Detroit natives, including the guest bassist Ron Carter, the only performer to play on every piece of the concert. (Ali Jackson, a Detroiter and the Lincoln Center orchestra's regular drummer, played on all but one.)

Wynton Marsalis was a constant, too, though not in the usual sense: he used his trumpet sparingly in the first half and not at all in the second, but was M.C. all night, introducing each composition with an engaging bit of back story. Early on, he succinctly enumerated the cultural exports of Detroit: automobiles, Motown and jazz.

Motown had no place on the program, for better or worse. Auto-

Motor City Jazz

Frederick P. Rose Hall

The Lincoln Center Jazz Orchestra plays in East Lansing, Mich., on Jan. 25 and in Detroit on Jan. 27.

Yusef Lateef, far left, joined others in playing his "Morning Trilogy," through waltz time and then a hazy slow section, ending on a pillow yet disquieting final chord: it was a nice stretch for the orchestra, and an overall success. But it was also ephemeral. To close the half, the orchestra snapped back to form for "Minor Situation," a bebop tinged number by Barry Harris.

Mr. Lateef, Mr. Carter and Mr. Jackson returned for the second half and were joined by the trumpeter Marcus Belgrave, the alto saxophonist Charles McPherson, the trombonists Curtis Fuller and Wycliffe Gordon, the pianist Geri Allen, and the percussionist Roger Quiñones. The ensemble played three pieces by Mr. Carter, including "Sheila's Song," a haunting flamenco lament. But it was on a tune by Mr. Belgrave, the sprightly and soulful "All My Love," that the group came alive.

The relative maturity of the musicians — only Mr. Jackson is under 30 — could be misconstrued as a sign that the Detroit jazz scene, which peaked in the 1960's, has moldered right along with the city's automotive industry. Any such thought was swept aside by Mr. Fuller's closer, "A la Mode," which stirred up one last mental image: sun shining, top down and an open road ahead.