

Jay Leonhart

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What is there to say about a bassist who is a prime jazz musician, sings and writes his own hilariously whimsical songs? A lot actually, if his name is Jay Leonhart who had a full house in stitches at Vitello's Saturday night, aided by the brilliant support of pianist Josh Nelson.

Leonhart came on stage and immediately settled any LA doubts about whether a bassist with a reputation as a Bob Dorough and Dave Frishberg-like instrumental humorist could cut it as a jazz player. Suffice to say he did so, from the first tune to the last, even though one of his best known songs is "It's Impossible To Sing and Play The Bass."



Despite that whimsical observation, his songs are at the center of any Leonhart show. And he offered a non- array of appealing goodies.

Among the many highlights:

- "Bass Aboard A Plane" - describing a problem faced by all bassists.

- "Me and Lenny" - in which Leonhart, sitting in first class, unexpectedly finds

Leonard Bernstein sitting next to him on a flight to Los Angeles.

- Add to that a song about history's first double bass a song inspired by Ivan Lins during a trip to Brazil.

There's a lot I could add, but none of it would be as on target as Leonhart himself in action. And the thought that kept recurring as we drove home was "When will Jay be back in LA again?"