

Los Angeles Times



FRIDAY
MARCH 9, 2001
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ARTS AND ENTERTAINMENT

Shedding Light on the Music and More

All That Jazz

By DON HECKMAN
SPECIAL TO THE TIMES

“Men, Women, and Girl Singers” by John Levy with Devra Hall (Beckham Publications Group) (available on the web at www.lushlife.com). Levy started out as a jazz bassist, working with—among many others—Erroll Garner, Art Tatum, Billie Holiday and George Shearing. But by 1951, when he was 39, he had turned his attention to full-time artist management, and the list of players on his roster at various times is a virtual all-star gathering of jazz musicians and vocalists. Levy, with companion Hall, has written an autobiography that reads like a jazz fan’s fantasy. There are intriguing anecdotes about dozens of artists, unexpected views of others. Above all, there is Levy’s continual presence as a low-keyed but powerful behind-the-scenes figure, little known to the wider jazz audience, but an enormously important force—for more than half a century—in jazz and its various tributary forms.