Mose Allison has been delivering his down-home brand of blues and swingin' swing to live audiences for almost 50 years. And Worcester has been a regular stop. In the '60s he used to spend an entire week playing at St. John's. His last local appearance was a sold-out affair when he opened the 1993 edition of Jazz at Sunset at the New England Science Center.

Allison is currently touring in support of his latest release, Glimmers and Gewgaws, for the Blue Note label. "Glimmers and Gewgaws? That's the little things you put on your mantle piece like little figurines and things," said Allison recently, speaking by phone from his Long Island home. "Everybody has 'em." Glimmers and Gewgaws (pronounced Jimmicks and Gravewigs) is a southern expression and just the kind of word play and turn-of-phrase stuff that delight the tune-smith in Allison. "I had the idea of the name for a long time," he says. "I ran across it somewhere years ago. I wrote this tune which is based on a little Coca-Cola exercise that I do on the piano - when I feel like I need to get my hands limbered up. Over the years I've practiced those simple exercises and then they have suggested a line, words to go with them."

Allison is the author of some great titles: "Your Mind is on Vacation, [and your mouth is working overtime]." "Everybody's Criss Cross [and they don't know the meaning of the word]." "I Don't Worry About A Thing nothing's going to be all right." As a songwriter, he has penned more than 100 titles, and his tunes have been covered by such diverse artists as the Who, the Clash, the Yards and Bonnie Raitt.

He was born Mose Allison, Jr., on November 11, 1927, in Tippopasso, Mississippi. His diverse influences range from Nat Cole to Thelonious Monk, from Charles Brown to Charles Ives. His own influence on other songwriters and performers can be heard in the work of George France; John Mayall, Van Morrison, Randy Newman, Ben Sidran and Pete Townshend.

"A man's voice is heaven, so cool, so decisively hip, uncomplicated," the Who's Townsend once remarked of Allison. Anything returns to Iowa with a trio consisting of drummer Bob Guilotti and bassist Paul Del Nero. He says he will play some of his hits and material from the new disc, as well as tunes from both his American blues and jazz songbooks.

Byard is the walking embodiment of jazz in this century. It's beyond words how much of an inspiration he's been, not just to me, but to so many trombonists, says Fuller. "He's the only trombone player that John Coltrane ever hired."

Farnsworth. Fuller makes his name for the Blue Note label.

"Who can be prepared for 'roots' to a musician who can handle them without being repetitious or imitative." Byard has long been at the vanguard of jazz education. For 18 years he directed his time between the New England Conservatory of Music and Hart College of Music. Today, he can be found teaching piano students at the Manhattan School of Music. At 75, Byard also continues a busy performance schedule. Besides working with his trio, Byard directs his big band, the April 10 Stompers, and tours in duo with Marcus and cellist David Eyges. In 1997, the Worcester-based Brownstone label released Night Leaves, an album featuring compositions by both Eyges and Byard.