

Colin Hemmingsen's Column

Rock in Schools Part 2

I thank William Dart for the correction to my last article regarding jazz in the UE syllabus, but the fact that it is an aural and not theoretical question further exemplifies the misconceptions about jazz being a subject without a theoretical background.

Mr Dart questions the validity of jazz being a university subject at all, and further states that one of the virtues of rock music is its non-academic nature. Why should a lack of knowledge improve the music, when in any other field, profession or activity in life, knowledge enhances understanding, ability and performance? When jazz first evolved, it was not considered an academic subject, but since then, the number of books published on or about the subject show that this is no longer the case (George Russell's "Lydian Chromatic Concept of Tonal Organisation", Jerry Coker's "Improving Jazz", David Baker's numerous books on improvisation are only a few). To the average orchestral player the contents of these books would be new ground. Can all the colleges and universities around the world and especially in the U.S., be wasting their time in teaching jazz theory and improvisation? Even those already in existence are insufficient to cope with the steady demand. Why should jazz/rock be singled out as the one subject not requiring advanced education? How can knowledge possibly inhibit creativity? I have had personal experience of just how "putting jazz and rock into the Faculties of Music Conservatorium" can solve a great deal. As I mentioned in a previous article, when I would ask older musicians how they did those things I wanted to do, I would be told, "just blow man", but on arriving in the States I found this was definitely not so. I spent some time at Berklee College of Music, which specialises in jazz and at New England Conservatorium, which has an excellent jazz department, and I know that practice alone, has not been the only reason for an improvement in my playing over the years, but knowing what to practise and why.

On reading the profiles of any American or European jazz or jazz/rock musicians, you will find that the best performer, writers and arrangers have all had an extensive academic training, nearly all specialising in jazz at one time or another. Carla Bley, Chic Corea, Jean Luc Ponty, Gary Burton, Woody Herman, Al De Meola, Billy Cobham, Herbie Hancock, John McLaughlin, Stanley Clarke — the list goes on.

When talking of rock in schools, I mean more specifically jazz/rock, not rock alone. If students were to study solely punk rock, I might agree that it may "promote philosophies and life styles at odds with many classrooms", but a study of the broader spectrum of jazz/rock would reveal as many diverse philosophies as there are musicians. I cannot, for example, imagine a wider difference in philosophies than those of a punk rock group and those of Seals and Crofts, who are believers in the B'hai faith. I feel that a similar approach should be made to the content of a music programme for schools as should be made by a group performing for an audience. There must be something that the student/audience can identify with, and this can be used as a basis from which to build an understanding and appreciation of more interesting, advanced and complex music.

If Mr Dart's definition of labourer is the same as mine — an unskilled worker, I can see nothing wrong with being a labourer, except to say that if the musician or person has the potential to be something more, he is not serving himself or his audience if he does not try to improve his standard of education and performance to the best of his ability.

As to whether healthy jazz/rock would result from varsity courses, in my experience, (and in the experience of many students from Creative Music School), I know that it most definitely does. There are selfish and greedy people in all walks of life, and music is no exception, but an environment where ideas can be exchanged in a musical and a social sense must benefit musicians, as it does any group or profession with a common interest.

Colin Hemmingsen

★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★

Dart's Letter

There were some good ideas in Colin Hemmingsen's Column.

One correction: Jazz is not an optional question in U.E. music, but the student's knowledge of the jazz works is tested in the aural paper rather than in the written paper. One total agreement: The three jazz works are very old-hat, especially if the Modern Jazz Quartet is supposed to live up to its name in the late 1970's. I think they chose it 'cos it opens with a bit of the old fugue. I would like to see some Carla Bley because I think her works are more discussable as an isolated piece of music than one piece by Armstrong or Ellington.

One query: I am not sure it is the duty of Universities to school rock musicians. I think Universities must, to some extent err on the side of the academic. One of the virtues of rock is its un-academic nature, and I am not sure whether healthy jazz/rock would be produced by too many varsity courses. Possibly there is a place for this at another tertiary institute.

Rock music in schools is wasted on a lot of the kids and a fair amount of it promotes philosophies and life-styles that are somewhat at odds with many classrooms.

The closing idea about N.Z. classical musicians be treated like artists and popular musicians as labourers is rather sad, but I don't feel putting rock and jazz into the Faculties of Music Conservatorium will really solve much.

P.S. What's wrong with labourers anyway?

William Dart

★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★

The Island Of Real
7 Airedale St. Ph 31-797.

**HEAVILY
INT'A MUSIC
LIVE**

**FRI & SAT NIGHTS AND
SUNDAY AFTERNOONS.**

Sunday Oct. 9th 4pm
CITIZEN BAND

(Geoff Chunn, Mike Chunn,
Brent Eccles and Warren Sly)

TAMA'S BAND
4pm Sunday Oct 16

HARD JAZZ
Every Friday &
Saturday after
Midnight

LIVE

The Heartbreakers Hello Sailor

Hello Sailor

Island of Real, Auckland.

I'll admit it, I like 'Hello Sailor'. They've had their problems transferring effectively into larger venues — witness their support of Melanie in Auckland and their top-billing spot at the Wellington Arts Festival rock concert — but in a smaller venue there's no one to touch them. The supreme hard-working, hard-rocking band in NZ at the moment. In Auckland they're developing a very large and well deserved following, so it's no surprise that the Island of Real was packed. The Sailors played what has now be-

come a standard set for them; Originals that will be included on their album and a wise choice of other material — Iggy Pop's "Nightclubbing", Thin Lizzy's "The Boys Are Back in Town", Desmond Dekker's "Shantytown", and as a finale the Velvet Underground's "White Light, White Heat". In the right sized venue such as this, they're a pretty superb unit, and Rickey Ball's muscular drumming was particularly impressive. Me? I'm waiting for the album. So when is it gonna be released? Huh?

Alastair Dougal



Heartbreakers Cricketers Arms, Wellington

If you had been listening to the radio over the last few weeks of summer, you might have heard a revamped version of the old rocker "Romeo & Juliet", over the airwaves. Wellington's Heartbreakers were the band that belonged to that song.

The Heartbreakers have been playing Wednesday to Saturday nights at the same Wellington pub for over a year now, and have built up a regular following. Despite their occasional T.V. appearances and record release, it is when performing live that they are at their best. They have developed a great rapport with their audience, combining a good line of patter with goonish antics to advantage.

Their material has plenty of appeal to a refugee from the nineteen-sixties like myself, but also to those who can enjoy the pure energy of the music from that era. A whole range of old favourites are covered, from the Beatles through the Kinks, Beach Boys, Yardbirds, and Hollies, to a cover of an early Dusty Springfield number. The occasional original tune, usually written by lead singer

Don Wilson, adds variety to their repertoire, while the nineteen-seventies are not completely ignored with the inclusion of some 10 c.c., and Sailor's "Girls, Girls, Girls!" On my last visit they had also added a tight version of Smokey Robinson's "Tears of a Clown" to their act.

The band's lineup consists of the standard two guitars, bass, drums, and lead vocalist who doubles occasionally on rhythm guitar. Familiar faces are Simon Morris (guitar) ex-Tamburlaine, Don Wilson (lead vocals) ex Ebony, and drummer Danny who had a stint with the Bulldogs Allstars Goodtime Band. Besides good musicianship, their main strength lies in vocal arrangements. Although a shade weak individually, they put together some decent harmonies, that are heard to best advantage on their versions of "Mr Tambourine Man", "Good Vibrations" and others.

Anyway, suffice to say that if you are in Wellington with nothing to do any Wednesday through Saturday night, go and take in the Heartbreakers over a beer. You'll find it extremely worthwhile.

Glenn Barclay

Who's Where

October 1977

Red Mole 9th to 12th, at the Ace of Clubs.
Fragments of Time 3rd-9th Lion Tavern, Wellington. 10th-15th Quinns Post, Wellington.

Golden Harvest 3rd-15th Awapuni Hotel, Palmerston North. 17th-18th Post Office Hotel, Pihitua. 19th-22nd Oxford Hotel, Levin. 24th-29th Te Mata Hotel, Hastings. 31st-5th November, Sandown Park Hotel, Gisborne.

Hazy Daze Wednesdays to Saturdays, Wiri Trust Tavern, Manukau City.

Hello Sailor Mon to Sat at Windsor Castle, from October 3rd.

Cohesion Royal George, Newmarket, 2pm Saturday afternoons.

Malcolm McCallum Thursday and Saturday nights at Leopard Tavern. Saturday afternoons at Windsor Castle and Wednesday nights at the Clichy wine bar.

If you are not here that's because you did not let us know. For Free listing write to **RIP IT UP** P.O. Box 5689, Auckland.

**D'Addario
Guitar Strings**
are at last available
in New Zealand.

*D'Addario
Guitar Strings*

Ask for them at your
nearest music store.

CASH! CASH! CASH!

For Your Good Used Albums
We trade old LPs on new ones!

RECORD EXCHANGE

15 St Kevins Arcade, Karangahape Rd. Ph 370 812