

# FESTIVAL REVIEWS

## The Rooftop Singers

By DOUGLAS BARBOUR

Bursting with musical wit, and "know-how," the Rooftop Singers last Friday gave the Fall Weekend one of the most enjoyable concerts heard in Halifax over the last three years.

The main reason for the success of this concert, and the group, was the refreshing leadership of Eric Darling, the musical director. Darling is a jack of all musical trades, and, as he proved Saturday evening, a master of them all as well. He finger-picked and thumb-picked his way through the evening on both the six and twelve string guitar. "Momma Don't Allow was designed to show off his virtuosity, but it was in evidence throughout; he got a very full sound from his instruments. One of the high points of the evening was his solo work on "Old Joe Clark."

Bill Svano, the other instrumentalist in the group, is equally talented. His work on both guitars remained at a consistently high level. As his role often consisted of providing rhythmic background for Darling's pyrotechnics, one can only assert that it was a necessary duty, giving the group the solid sound it needed. Kudos should also go to their bassist.

The third member of the trio, Mindy Stewart, provided both voice and charm.

The trio's singing, it must be admitted, was not outstanding. This was the problem with the whole evening's performance. Instrumentally, the Rooftop Singers provided their listeners with a superbly professional show, vocally, they were little better than amateurs. The best voice of the three for folk purposes, was Darling's. The group, however, did have a solid harmony, and their sense of rhythm was positive — more than can be said for many popular groups in the circuit today.

Their repertoire was varied, and interesting. The few songs completely unknown to the audience, however, proved to be the most popular.

The Rooftop Singers are entertainers. Eric Darling repeatedly demonstrated this with his between-number patter, and in his arrangements of their songs. As entertainers, their appeal is broader than most similar groups. The sole reason is the superior musicianship of Darling. Very few popular groups can provide the driving excitement of his guitar and banjo solos. As entertainment, the evening was a total success.

One sour note; some of the audience felt constrained to clap in rhythm whenever the group started a well known song. The singers voices were usually drowned out by those of the audience. The persistent clappers proved once again the old axiom that an audience can only clap in one rhythm which is never the one of the song they are destroying.

## Students reject Ensign, Jack

The Canadian Union of Students (CUS) has urged the federal government's 15-man non-partisan flag committee to put a motion before the Commons calling for a distinctive Canadian Flag other than the Red Ensign or Union Jack.

In a letter written to each of the MP's on the committee, CUS president Jean Bazin said the flag debate has consumed an unwarranted amount of time and taxpayer's money.

He said CUS hopes that in the interests of Canadian unity, the Commons will waste no time in accepting the Committee's recommendations.

## Singers tumble Roof "Moe, Moe" calls crowd.

### Moe Koffman

By JAMES STANBURY

Moe Koffman's quartet brought us a taste of the creative excitement felt in a live performance of good jazz. Good jazz is made when the musicians express their spontaneous feelings of the movement, and to know what is happening at the moment, you must be there. The presence of a receptive audience is important, the audience last Thursday night was "with it". The musicians enjoyed playing as much as the audience enjoyed listening.

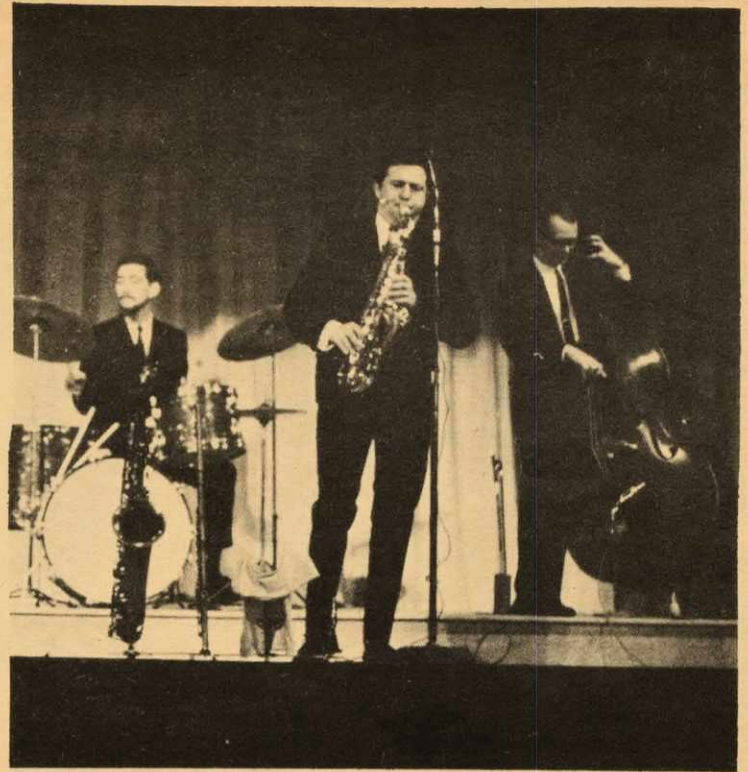
Moe Koffman's jazz is emotionally subdued, his musical speech is "well-mannered." He and guitarist Ed Bicket conversed musically like two people who know each other well and understand the meanings of the intonations of each other's music. The drummer and the bass player formed a dependable and sensible rhythm section.

The more earthy idiom which

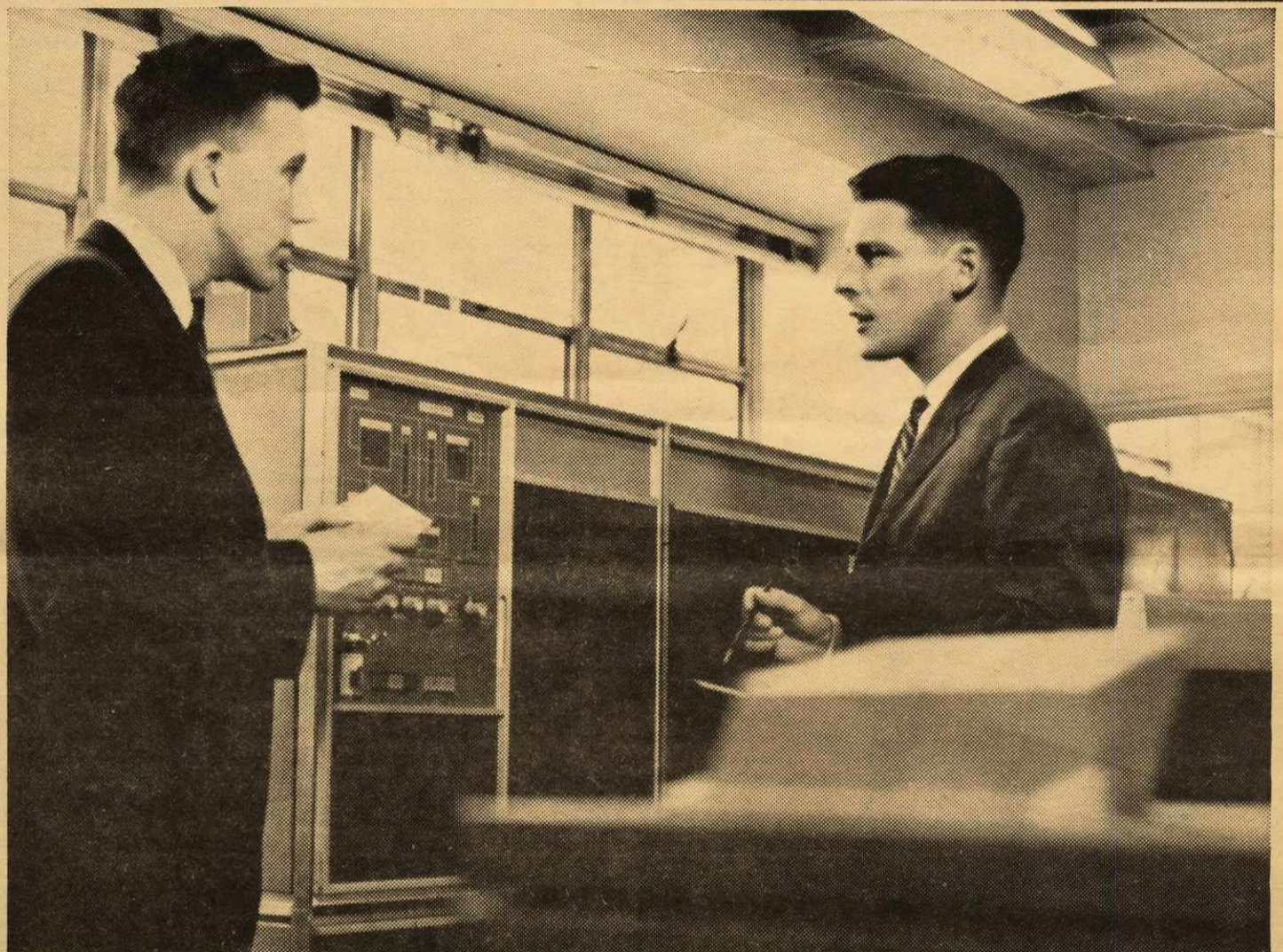
Moe Koffman used when playing the two saxes at once did not seem quite as familiar to him, but still "swung"

But whether the musician's nature is emotionally subdued or explosive, it is paradoxical that the more personal the expression of the musician becomes, the more it reaches the listeners. If the musician plays with spontaneity he leaves the more superficial aspects of his personality, thus expressing his true essence, reaching this way the true essences of the others present.

Let us hope that we will have more concerts like this. There are many good jazz musicians in Montreal and Toronto, let alone in the U. S. A., who could well be brought here to give Dalhousie audiences the chance to get acquainted with what is often called North America's only original art form.



Jazzman Moe Koffman collects kudos from crowd at Rink on Thursday night.



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