

Tuesday's rock concert



...and then another

by Nanker Phledge

Tuesday night's rock concert featuring Wishbone Ash, Camel and Dr. Hook & the Medicine Show lived up to most people's expectations. The first set featured Camel, a virtually unknown British rock band in its budding stages, gathering experience by travelling an extensive tour with a recognized group, in this case Wishbone Ash. Camel's stage presentation is a familiar one, known to most regular concert fans: They have to sell albums as well as be impressive musically. Overall, Camel did both. The songs were introduced in connection with albums past and present. Musically, Camel fared quite well but again only in parts. Peter Bardens on keyboards was the most impressive member of the band. He possessed an adequate mastery of his instruments without overdoing the electronic mind games many bands emphasize, usually to the point of losing crowd interest. Barden carried the weaker lead guitar in most of the songs. Drummer Andy Ward also showed a keen mastery of the art of providing the proper backbeat and tempo to music that varied in intensity, as did many of Camel's numbers.

Edmonton was the last show for the group, winding up a three month touring schedule to now return to England.

Wishbone Ash were the

totally professional, totally accomplished concert band the crowd expected them to be. They played a long set and were well accepted by the audience. Instrumentally and vocally they demonstrated why they've been so successful commercially, and why they have large audience support. The twin lead guitars blended well; if you were unaware that founding Wishbone Ash guitarist Ted Turner had been replaced, you wouldn't have known the difference.

It goes without saying the drumming and bass guitar work were of an equal quality to the lead guitars.

The real disappointment was Dr. Hook. He didn't play long enough, nor did he play a good selection of their music.

As in their previous Edmonton tour, they downplayed their musical potential by up-playing their stage antics. Undeniably Dr. Hook is an entertaining show, but they simply left the audience frustrated by presenting the same show Tuesday as they did several years ago. They would do better as an amateur band of ham actors who occasionally play rock 'n roll instead of being a professional rock band with the tendency to ham it up at the expense of their musical expertise. There still remains no doubt Dr. Hook could have stolen the show from Wishbone Ash, but they didn't.

One view...

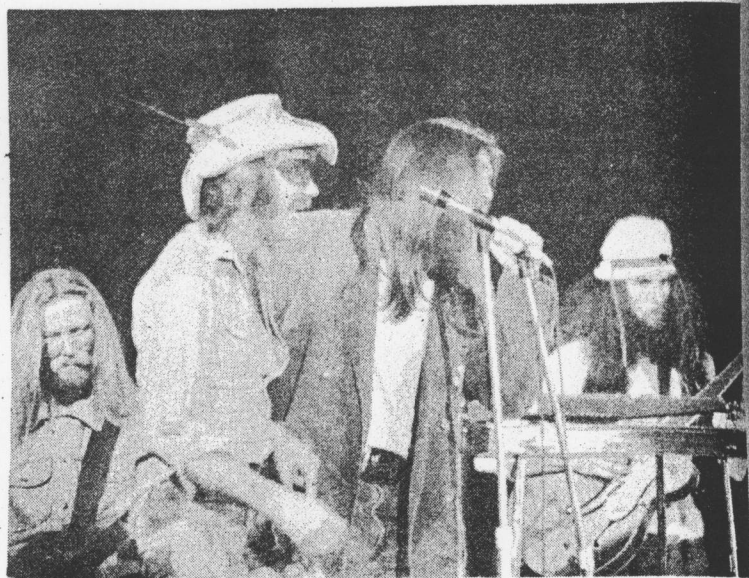
Dave Garrett

The over-all impression that Tuesday's concert left was one of satisfaction. The audience left knowing that they had been very successfully entertained.

The first act of the evening, Camel, were very impressive. They have that well known, funky, English rock sound that so many bands use. Their driving, tight-knit rhythms flowed so smoothly, building at just the right moments 'til one had the impression that something was about to explode. Individually, I found the rhythm section to be precise and imaginative. The keyboards went well until the end, when the Moog made its appearance. The synthesizer work was good for a short while, but became tedious and monotonous. Camel's guitarist fascinated the audience with his very original arrangements. One lead in particular utilized a unique combination of echo, slide guitar, and some very fast playing. Camel left a very favorable impression on its' first Edmonton audience.

In the middle came Dr. Hook. What more needs to be said. One of the most amusing rock acts around, Dr. Hook provided excellent comic relief to any concert. As musicians they are weak. Their songs are simple and are played simple, and that is how everyone likes to hear them.

Wishbone Ash, initially were a disappointment. To start with, they were too loud. Volume is good if it is clean, where everything can be heard, and nothing is lost in the mixing.



This however was not the case Tuesday night. The drums disappeared underneath the guitars, and the guitars ran together into a single sound, not that of three distinct instruments.

After two songs from their new album, which because of the volume couldn't be appreciated, they played two songs, "The King Will Come", and "Warrior", from Argus, the most well known Wishbone Ash album. They were very disappointing renditions. It wasn't until they had played several more new songs and then one more old song that one understood the disappointment. Wishbone Ash have changed. They are no longer the intricate, two guitar melody band that they were on the last five albums. With the addition of their new guitarist to replace Ted Turner, the band has become a loud-blast-their-minds-out rock and roll band. But, one hell of a rock and roll

band. Once this difference was noted, and one accepted that Laurie Wisefield couldn't replace Ted Turner on the older songs, the new Wishbone Ash could be appreciated.

The new Wishbone Ash is a very dynamic, powerful rock band. Their show proceeds to rock on and on, reaching heights of tremendous energy. Part of the energy was inspired by the fact that the temperature in the Fieldhouse, by the end of the show was down to about thirty degrees, and Wishbone wanted to keep warm.

I found myself quite pleased with the band the way they are now, but I still would have preferred to have seen them as they originally were. I, for one, like the old Wishbone Ash better. Perhaps next time they make an appearance though, a better sound system can be provided, and maybe even a warm concert hall.

DuMaurier presents second of three concerts

The du Maurier Council for the Performing Arts will present an *Evening of Gershwin and of Favorite Ballets* as the second concert in a series of three for this season. Stanley Black will lead the Edmonton Symphony Orchestra and principal dancers of the Alberta Ballet Company in selections from

such popular ballets as *Sylvia*, *Coppelia* and *Le Cid*. Edmonton's own Alexandra Munn will play Gershwin's "Rhapsody in Blue".

Stanley Black belongs to that very rare breed of world-renowned musicians who defy all attempts at categorisation. Indeed, there are so many facets to his career - pianist, conductor, composer, arranger, musical-director; classical music, light music, jazz, Latin-American music, radio, television, films, concert-hall and recording studio - that there must be countless thousands of people on both sides of the Atlantic who are not at all certain whether all these "labels" belong to one and the same person.

To Stanley Black there is nothing bizarre in the idea of conducting a Symphony Orchestra one day and playing the piano in a Jazz or Latin-American group the next; or going from the composing of a Jazz-motivated film score to the scoring of a new and exquisite setting of Debussy's "Claire de Lune;" or relaxing to records of both Mozart and Sergio Mendez or Elgar and Duke Ellington. He rejects the specialisation because he has never felt the need or the urge to specialise. He considers himself primarily a musician and therefore all things musical come within the orbit of his instinctive grasp and understanding.

As he says, so succinctly: "It's all music, music to be

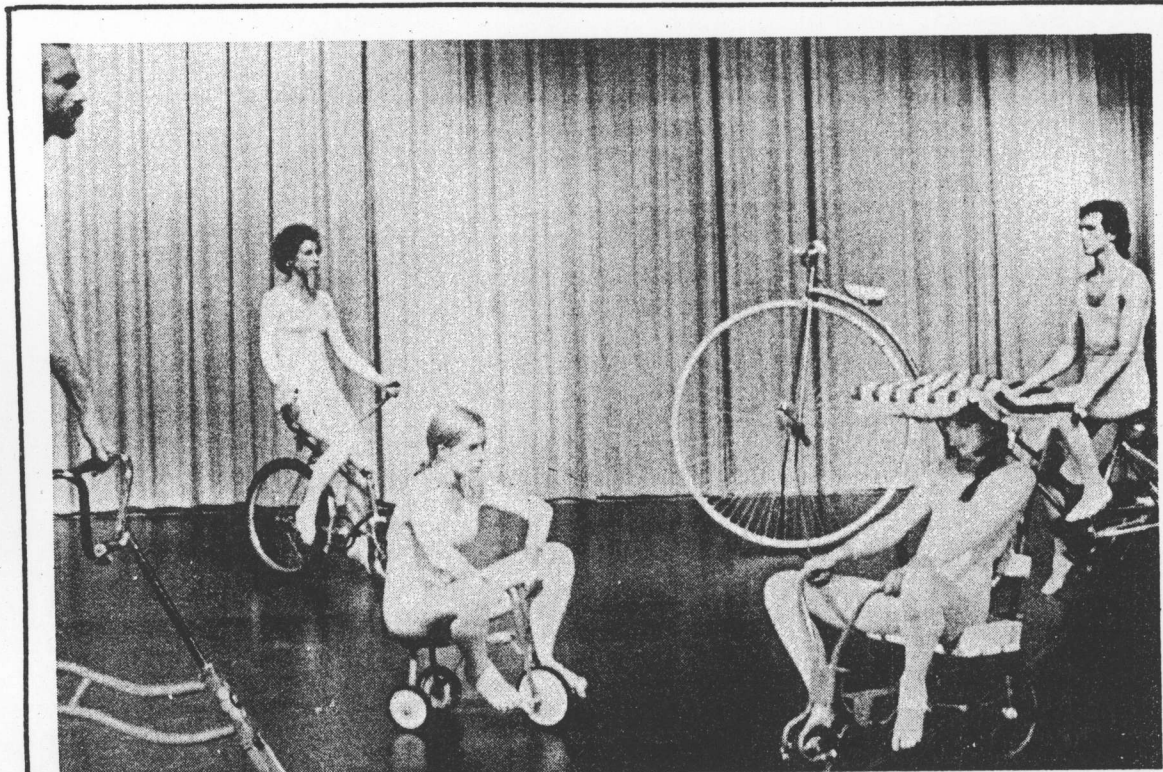
studied and enjoyed and made available for others to enjoy; the only unforgivable music is that which is boring, badly written or badly performed."

Two performances of *An Evening of Gershwin and of Favorite Ballets* are scheduled to the Jubilee Auditorium; Friday, February 7, 8:30 p.m. and Saturday February 8, 8:30 p.m. Tickets are available at the Symphony Box Office, Jubilee Auditorium (433-2020) and the Box Office, The Bay Downtown (424-0121).

Price of gold rises

With record prices rising, the people who hand out gold records have decided that it's getting too easy for recording artists to earn gold albums. So, RIAA - which certifies gold records has announced a new standard that will force artists to sell more discs in order to win gold honors.

The new requirement calls for a minimum sale of 500,000 copies of an album. Traditionally, a record did not have to sell a specific number of copies, but had to have sales of \$1 million based on one-third of the record's list price. As album prices have risen, the old standard meant that most \$6.98 list albums needed to sell only about 420,000 copies to become gold.



Vancouver's Anne Wyman Dance Theatre will appear at the Students' Union Theatre this Saturday, February 8 at 8:30 p.m. Workshops will be offered by members of the company at 1:00 p.m. on February 9. The workshops will be divided for advanced and introductory. Tickets and workshop passes may be purchased at the Students' Union Box Office. Notice: *The Gateway* Arts Department requires a reviewer for Saturday's performance. If you are interested, drop into *the Gateway* office and ask for Harold. Two free passes will be provided.