

Necessity mothers invention

Good jazz is aim of new music workshop



Kathy Moses plays the flute in new jazz club.

Gary Cook photo

By AGNES KRUCHIO

For a non-musician such as myself, getting so wrapped up in the musical process that switching into ordinary verbal expression should prove difficult, is a pretty rare experience. Yet that is just what happened during the performance of the Mother Necessity Big Band last Sunday night. I became, almost literally, speechless.

Here was a band of 18 musicians, whose energy and enthusiasm, the clear, firm sound they produced, and the sheer contagion of joy in their music served as ample evidence that what they have set out to do was long overdue. For here, finally, they were playing in a club which was theirs, to an audience which was appreciative, and playing the kind of music they most believed in. Mother Necessity's Jazz Work-

shop is the name of this place, and good jazz is the name of this game. It's a new club which has just opened some 10 days ago, and already, it is a success.

"It's a really good feeling playing here," said one veteran of the music business. Herbie Spanier, 44, is a member of the Mother Necessity Big Band and has spent much time in Montreal, Las Vegas and New York.

"There are no inhibitions from dumb clubowners here, just good clean vibes and a creative atmosphere," he said.

Mother Necessity Jazz Workshop is the brainchild of Ted Moses, members of the Ted Moses Quintet such as Mike Malone and Kathy Moses, and Michael Maile, who though an entrepreneur, loves jazz enough to have donated much of his time to administer the club's business. It is an idea that has been around for many years, but has only recently been given the kind of support it needed to materialize.

"It was a pretty frightening idea," says Moses who spearheaded it all, "especially before it all came together; it's a large chunk of time, money and a heavy commitment." He and members of the Ted Moses Quintet had donated much of the initial money needed; they had set up the Canadian Foundation for the Improvisational Arts, a foundation with a non-profit charter which supports the club, and Moses himself took three months out of his busy schedule which includes writing, job commitments and teaching in order to build the place.

Essentially, the club is to be a non-alcoholic, friendly place, open six nights a week with the exception of Mondays booking two or three small groups during the week, and the Mother Necessity Big Band on Sunday nights. These will be organized performances between 8 and 12 p.m., and in February they are hoping to start an after-hours club where anyone can come, sit in, and play.

"If this place is going to work," says Kathy Moses, "it's because people care about it and are not trying to make money." Everyone involved is a musician, and a volunteer. "People have come from all over, people we didn't even know, and have donated their time to make tables, sweep floors, paint walls, carpet the stage and

the floors, put in doors, make decorations and all the endless chores that had to be done," says Kathy. Some forty people chipped in at various times.

"There has never been a situation that has been this open and this well-organized in Toronto in the last ten years," says Mike Malone.

"What I hope will happen is that there will be a lot of inspiration and stimulation between the writers and the bands that come together," he says. Although up till now Ted Moses has done most of the writing for Mother Necessity, Malone is also beginning to take a part in writing some of their material, and this will expand, they say.

"The difference between this and the other clubs that have come and gone before it is that this one is being sponsored by musicians, while the others were not," says Malone. "It's our place and we will keep it going, come hell or high water."

Fans of good music can only be grateful.

New music, jazz mix at Bethune

On January 16 and 17 at 9 p.m. the York Community will have its first opportunity to experience the exciting and unpredictable music of The Suspended Quartet. This weekend Norman's will present two evenings of this high energy ensemble, whose members are James Orr (drums), Peter Penev (piano) and Robert Sax (alto sax and flute).

The Suspended Quartet describes itself as "conceived through collective improvisation and dedicated to the performance of music which constantly seeks to define new horizons of self-expression."

Speaking for the group, Sax stated: "We attempt to create something out of ourselves alone, drawing from personal experience rather than an established framework, such as a set of chord changes."

"We trade reliability of form for what we agree to be the greater advantage of spontaneity," he added.

"Our music combines the two modern schools of improvised music. One grew out of jazz, like Cecil Taylor, and the other out of classical music, like John Cage. Now the two have grown together, as in the music of Anthony Braxton."

The result is music which combines the most beautiful aspects of each form while being more receptive to new ideas than either jazz or classical music alone, he believes. Thus the group "creates a musical experience which is always challenging and exciting, both for the performer and the listener," he stated.

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