



Saxophonist Archie Shepp in Ron Mann's *Imagine The Sound*.

## Imagine Mann's film

**Clifton Joseph**  
Award-winning jazz film *Imagine the Sound* debuts this Friday at the Carleton Cinema in its first Canadian feature engagement. Screened already at festivals in Toronto, Paris, London and San Francisco, it won a Silver Hugo for Best Feature-length Documentary in Chicago. The film is an ambitious exploration of the dynamics of the "New Jazz" that flourished in the sixties, and features four of the music's most prolific player/composers/articulators: pianists Cecil Taylor and Paul Bley, trumpeter Bill Dixon (with Art Davis and Freddie Waits), and multi-talented saxophonist Archie Shepp (backed by John Betsch, Santi Debriano and Ken Werner).

With *Imagine the Sound* director Ron Mann offers a passion-filled insight into not only the music but also its inspiration and the social terrain from which it came.

The film elucidates the creative process in both film and music, where microphones, technicians and cameramen sometimes occupy the screen with the musicians. According to Mann, "We didn't want any pretense. We were making a film and we did not want it to be slick and antiseptic".

Whatever the technique, there was no escaping its focus — the music. The performances were fluid, spirited and filmed with care: from the eclecticism of Paul Bley to the rhythmic shrieks and shouts and romance of post-Coltrane Archie Shepp; from

Cecil Taylor's rapidfire sheets of sound, note heaped upon note, to the dramatic intensity and clarity of sound of trumpeter Bill Dixon. The cumulative effect was an awesome barrage of music that attracts the viewer.

Mann has also managed to balance the performances with effective dialogue.

And what do they talk about? About Charlie Parker, Coltrane Ornette, George Russell and more; about New York, Los Angeles; about their poverty in the midst of their creativity; about the ripoff managers and club owners and about the continuing woeful neglect, misunderstanding and callous exploitation that has almost become synonymous with Jazz.

In a spurt of rage, Bill Dixon spoke for many when he exclaimed, "A jazz musician is a social category. If I were white they'd love to have me do what I do. I don't think we live in a part of the world where a Black man can be bright and have ideas and make the situation better for everyone. Now, that may be my paranoia, but that has also been my experience." And from pianist Cecil Taylor: "The implications of the music have gone beyond the dungeon cafe. You don't only change the organizational concepts of music. You have to change the environment that the music has traditionally been played in."

*Imagine* was co-produced by veteran Toronto Jazz producer Bill Smith. Mann says he recently finished filming his second film which will be about poetry as performing art.

## Telling tales in the eighties

**Laurie Kruk**

"Let me tell you a story." Those words have gone out of fashion in recent years, replaced by "Let's watch television" or "let's go to a movie". Somehow the 'Oral Tradition' was lost. But thanks to the perseverance of some folks who call themselves The Toronto Storytellers, it has been rediscovered and reborn as the art form that weaves all humanity into its timeless tapestry: story telling.

In the last four years The Toronto Storytellers have raised public interest in their activity by word-of-mouth. That is the secret of storytelling: that the stories be told to a group of listeners without a script. Each storyteller brings something new and special to his/her tale: a dialect, a forgotten history, or just their own perspective on life.

Some stories are researched and rehearsed long before they are told; others are anecdotes

recalled on the spot. Whatever the tale, everyone is encouraged to join in, and take a place in the centre of the candlelit room.

Immediately the people draw together in their appreciation of one another's skill. There is a sense of tradition inherent in storytelling, for it dates back to the time of the troubadours when men and women gathered around wandering minstrels anxious to hear tales of faraway lands and a brief respite from their dreary surroundings. The tales supplied emotional reinforcement which we still need today perhaps more than ever before.

With Sony Walkmans reinforcing personal space, it is nice to see people communicating. The 'Oral Tradition' is alive and well in Toronto 1982.

There are 3 million stories in the naked city, yours is one of them...

## Rich mine of talent

# Caribbean show impresses

**Clifton Joseph**  
Excitement and applause were the catchwords at Burton Auditorium on Friday night as the Caribbean Students' Association presented its Annual Cultural Show. Awkwardly titled "Carib Euro Africa", the programme was directed by Jeff Henry, Assistant Chairman of the Theatre Department and head of Theatre Fountainhead.

Henry's direction enabled the show to flow without the pretense of a designated Master of Ceremonies. Instead, Anansi — the cunning trickster of West African/West Indian folklore — was the thread that presumed this role. The thread, though, was not sustained, and the Anansi motif was missing for almost the entire second half of the programme. Nonetheless, the standing-room-only crowd of over seven hundred (they had to turn people away at the door) clapped, laughed and frequently demanded more from the steady stream of poetry, music, dance, and skits.

The acts ranged from first time amateurs to seasoned professionals, and except for Jean Sheen's Chissamba Chiyuka Dance Troupe (which put on a colorful, well-choreographed segment) and a few musicians, all were members of the York community.

Eagerly awaited each year, the show has become a showcase for a rich mine of talent. This year was no exception: Joe Robinson

choreographed a daring and adventurous Voodoo Dance, complete with candles, screams and Voodoo priestesses.

Canadian Freestyle dance Championship winner Orson Payne, teamed up with Sandra Grant, for a touching though sometime constrained dance

duet. Henry "Lord Cosmos" Gomez, guitar in hand, delivered some humorous satiric calypso songs. Poet Clifton Joseph read from his works and the Yorktones Steelband played an energetic pan with funkified Calypso rhythms and melodies.

Afterwards, in the din of excitement in the crowded backstage area, Coordinating Committee member Ian (Bassman) Augustine shined a smile of satisfaction. "I am already planning for next year."



Bethune jazz night featured the Keith Blackley Quartet in concert.

## Faustus is TAT's latest experiment

**Michelle Rosenzweig**

In the upcoming Triple Action Theatre (TAT) production of *Faustus*, Artistic Director Steven Rumbelow isolates the essence of the *Faustus* theme. Adapting his script mostly from the Marlowe, Goethe and Byron versions, Rumbelow presents a modern concept of hell. By placing the alter-egos of *Faustus* and *Mephistophillis* (interestingly played by a woman) together in a room for eternity, he conveys the message that hell is omnipresent rather than confined to one space.

*Faustus* is unable to accept his own limitations, and therefore fails. Rumbelow personally is *Faustus*' opposite: he sees himself as a painter, working on a defined canvas using actors as paint. As in modern art, the viewer must reach within himself and draw upon his own resources in order to be able to fully understand and appreciate the work.

Not everyone is willing or able to accept the involvement that modern art and modern theatre require. Rumbelow maintains that, "In this artistic mode (experimental theatre) you don't think about, or know the public. One creates for oneself and exhibits hoping that they will like it. And if they don't then you close. You don't change the play to suit the audience. We are presenting alternatives to the functioning mode of theatre."

Apparently the public does like *Faustus*. According to their research in Yorkshire, England, the world-renowned company has represented Britain in 36 international festivals. *Curriculum Vitae* and *Solarts* were hits at last year's Toronto Theatre Festival and before that *Ulysses* was a huge success during a run at York University and Theatre Passe Muraille last October.

Motivation, personal experience and research are all key words for Rumbelow who says "if something obsesses you, you must work on it. We are our own laboratories."

The research itself is often the main objective. During the next year, TAT will be travelling throughout North America researching the concept of the shaman. Working with different cultures, seeking the "anthropological root of the actor", they will return with at least a film, paintings and a book about their experiences if not a theatrical play.

*Leap in the Dark* is a

workshop, taking place in March, consisting of a week of intensive work with TAT. They will be looking into the creative resources of the participants and learning how they can tap those at a future time. Actors interested in participating in this experience should contact Steven Rumbelow at Theatre Passe Muraille — 363-2416. There is a low key selection process involved to ensure the right mix of people who will be working together at all hours of the day and night.

*Faustus* at Theatre Passe Muraille, 16 Ryerson Ave., 363-2416, runs from March 6-26.



A member of the Triple Action Theatre's production of *Faustus*.