

The Second Coming of Moonbuzz

by Ken Burke

Awwww Yeah! Anyone here interested in rock'n'roll/r&b played ju's right - loud, fast, and with an edge to it? Well, Friday last at the Grafton St. Cafe saw the resurrection of the **Moonbuzz Blues Band**, Halifax's own humble purveyors of that stuff to anyone that wants to listen (and dance). Yes, a LOCAL band, so the point of this here writing is to let the college citizen know that there's stuff that exists outside Super Subs, the Misty Moon, the Palace and the like that deserves your attention. And Moonbuzz (sometimes the **Black and Blues Band**) deserves that attention, being, in this guys opinion, the best band around these parts and one to reckon with all the professional bands we get sold to us by the dozen.

It'd be easy to do this whole thing just on the history of these guys because they're largely responsible for the popularity of Halifax's local scene. Moonbuzz came in just as the first wave of punk poseurs were fading away, outlasted the second wave, and are back to see about the third. What they did was make going to the less publicized local groups popular again, starting off with a lot of high school support (that's where they started) and attracting others as word spread. Members of Moonbuzz have also helped out other bands, playing in groups like Agro, Nobody's Here and Red Leader while jamming with anybody and offering encouragement to various weirdos such as the Double Knot Spys.

Course they've had bad times too - they've weathered a good deal of personnel problems and musical conflicts the last year or so. But Moonbuzz is back, stripped down to four members (figuratively) and playing and looking better than ever. Its down to **Andrew Lordly** on vocals, sax, harp, dancing, and pro-dance lectures, **Mark Glover** on gee-tar, very occasional back-up vocals, and money collecting, **Mike Phillips** (Lops, or Lops Plops) on bass, vocals, and million-dollar smile, and pick-up drummer **Gary Potts** (harp player for the Water St. Blues Band). Since it was their first concert in about a half a year I think everybody there was expecting a lot from 'em, but they went past all that, wearing everybody out that stayed till the end (including themselves) by the sheer energy they were giving out.

Ah, but enough of such generalities - on to what actually happened. After a late start and trouble with the mikes leading to an aborted first set, things didn't look too good. But it was obvious that Moonbuzz was up for the concert, so when the sound got sorted out, things really started rolling in the right direction. The only way to describe Glover last Friday was shit-hot - coming out of his stage shell to set the pace with some pretty manic rhythm guitar and leads that surprised me in their power. His acoustic guitar on a hot version of Not Fade Away was the highlight of the first set, ending a string of r&b

standards dished out most finely and building up to the rest of the night.

Which was, simply, fantastic. Anyone who's ever seen Moonbuzz can attest to the fact that they're a great visual band, and the center of attention is undeniably Lordly. Jumping and dancing all over the stage and through the audience, singing getting more and more powerful as he goes on and he's also finding out how to use it best. As for his sax, I had always been half-and-half until I saw it fit perfectly into Summertime Blues (Eddie Cochran forever!), a song that I thought was perfect the way it was.

Lops singing, when he could grab the mike from Andrew, was superb, as was his bass-ing

(naturally). Giving everything a solid base was Potts on Drums - the kind of simple drummer r&b calls for, not dropping drum fills in every musical space like so many show-offs do.

Towards the end I lost track of highlights - the whole dancing set was one - but I must mention that 'Im a Man was done better by Moonbuzz than by ANYBODY I've ever seen or heard, or will see or hear. Oh, and yeah, it goes without saying that Satisfaction, Jumping Jack Flash and You Can't Always Get What You Want were as good as they ever were, doesn't it?

Hopefully, this has communicated to the uninitiated just what the **Moonbuzz Blues Band** is about and will drag more a you to see them next time their

posters sneak up around Dal a few days before they play. They're even playing a little Reggae music along with the regular stock fer variety, though it's really more like rhythm®gae to these ears. Don't let the lack of booze at the **Grafton St. Cafe** divert you next time they play - the music provides all the buzz you could want, and besides, there's no lack of bars in the neighbourhood to pop out to during a break between sets. Only problem is, Potts gone and they're looking for a steady drummer with their musical tastes (this article may function as an ad). May they find him soon because I don't want to wait another six months to see Moonbuzz live. Now if I had only brought a tape recorder....

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