



photo Doug Olsen

Tommy Banks trio backs up legendary jazz saxophonist John Handy at The Yardbird Suite.

Hot jazz

John Handy
Yardbird Suite
Through November 3

review by Mike Evans

Once upon a time, a city named Edmonton was known as an oasis in the desert of Canadian jazz between Toronto and Vancouver. It dried up some time ago. The Edmonton Jazz Society has taken it upon themselves to attempt a remedy of this situation by resurrecting the Yardbird Suite. In the Yardbird's inaugural year, the EJS is bringing Edmontonians some of the finest musicians available. One of these is John Handy, a saxophonist of international repute.

Handy served his apprenticeship under Charlie Mingue in the early 60's and has since become recognized as one of the true pioneers of jazz/rock/symphonic/eastern classical fusion. In addition to being a fine musician, Handy is also a musicologist, and has taught jazz and Black Music History at Stanford, Berkeley and San Francisco State

Zappacosta: sex appeal and more

story and inerview by Dave Burns

Who is Alfie Zappacosta? I was assigned to write an article about him to promote his show this Friday at Dinwoodie Lounge. They set me up with passes to see him play at the Highway Motor Inn last Saturday night, but I couldn't make it, due to a blizzard. This article had to be written; it was imperative that I discover who this character is. I shrugged and ventured forth.

I came across two girls in HUB Mall that I knew, and asked them if they had heard of this guy.

"Oh ya!" one of them replied. "I'm going to see him for sure! He's just gorgeous!"

I told them that I had heard he had a wild stage show, and that he was a great singer.

"He can sing, too?" they both squealed with pleasure. I decided it was time to go.

His album has a hungry, polished feel to it that is soft but sexy. I recognized some of the songs right away, such as "Runaround." His style is a little soft for my taste, but it's done very well, and could possibly translate into a captivating live show.

This performer has tremendous sex appeal. So did Elvis. When asked how his "charm" affected his image, he replied in a recent

Edmonton Sun article that sex appeal didn't hurt, but it was only part of the show.

Tuesday at noon, I got a phone call from Capitol Records asking if I wanted an interview with Zappacosta himself. Sure, why not? My curiosity was getting the better of me. I was told I would get a call from him in an hour.

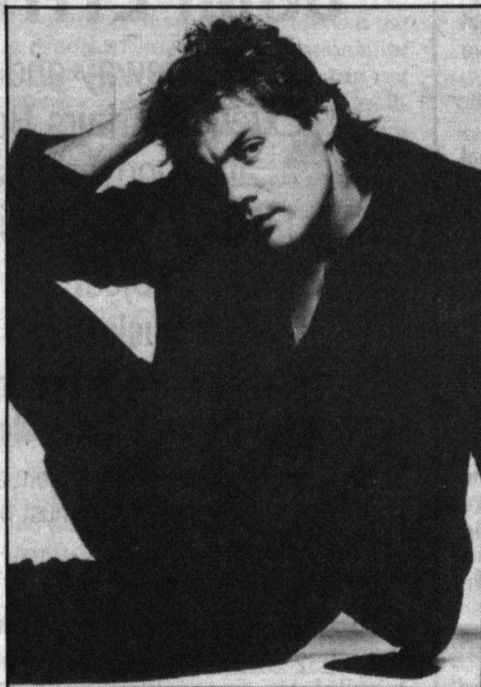
When Zappacosta did call, I was surprised by the calm, soft voice. He casually answered my questions as I tried to discover who he is. Here are some highlights:

Q: Have you played out west very often?

Zappacosta: No, not for four years, but I've always liked being out on the road, and I've had some good fun out here. You see, we haven't even been playing as a band for a year and a half. When you do a tour like this, you have to have a lot of support. Before this album, there simply wasn't any reason to perform. But we're still together. I've been playing with Surrender for nine years now.

Q: Are you pleased with how your Zappacosta album from this summer is selling?

Zappacosta: Well, I'm pleased with the album, sure, but it's not selling like crazy. The most important thing is it will allow me to break new ground. I've also had some very



"You have to love bouncing around on stage and doing wild things with women after the show."

positive critiques on it, and I'm going to go back into the studio this December to work on a new album. This all helps to keep the ball rolling. We've also done a video to the song "We Should Be Lovers" that Doug Bennet of Doug and the Slugs directed for us. I should add too that it has a pool of jello in it and is essentially x-rated.

Q: Do you recommend this life to anyone?

Zappacosta: You really have to love it. You have to love bouncing around on stage making passes at beautiful women that you could be doing wild things with after the show. If you don't love that, you won't ever make it.

Q: What were your major musical influences?

Zappacosta: Well, I loved rhythm and blues, Tower of Power, that sort of thing. For a while there, I was really into folk, especially James Taylor. I guess, though, that my major influence is opera. You see, when I was a boy and my dad was a barber, he would make me listen to this stuff for hours on end. I grew to really appreciate Italian style songs. Really, though, I want my music to be unique. Influences aside, it has to be unique.

Edmontonian Above: high

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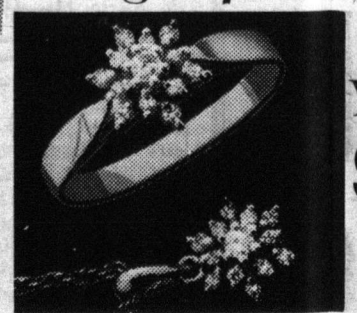
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