

ARTS

'Internationalists' Manteca set to fire up Winters

By SUSAN VANSTONE

Manteca has an identity crisis. "We're not really jazz, we're too dance-oriented to be called that, and it's the dance element that keeps us together," said Manteca bassist/musical director Henry Heilig.

Manteca, the nine-member, Toronto-based instrumental band has been labelled salsa/soca/calypso/funk/latin/fusion, and especially jazz.

"We don't dismiss the jazz term," continued Heilig. "Everyone has their own definition of what jazz is — it could be Dixieland or the Shuffle Demons. We're called jazz because we're instrumentalists."

Heilig said Manteca prefers the term "International" to describe their "tropical pop music."

Best known for the single, "Danceteria," the band — in its 10th year — has progressed to the forefront of

the Toronto club scene.

Manteca formed "almost by accident," according to Heilig. Members moved to Toronto from places such as Los Angeles, New York City, Edmonton, and Prince Edward Island. The musicians formed Manteca to play Latin music, and soon found a steady gig at Fridays. After four albums, the band has adapted a more popular sound, while retaining its original tropical elements.

The band has absorbed influences from African chorus to Brazilian Samba, big band, calypso, and folk. Prominent percussion and horns, and songs such as "Nouvelle Afrique," and "Ouagadougou," have given the band their "musical internationalists" label.

Although all members have worked with non-instrumental artists — as diverse as Long John Baldry, Ben E. King, and Sharon

Lois, and Bram — they have resisted suggestions to add a vocalist.

"To acquire a singer now would be artificial," explained Heilig. "We'd rather not do what everyone else does just to get a little further."

Manteca has won numerous awards, including the 1988 Casby for best jazz recording, and has twice

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HEY DUDES, LET'S PARTY!!! The men of Manteca (clockwise from left): Aaron Davis, Rick Tait, Gary Boigon, Henry Heilig, Steve McDade, John Johnson, Charlie Cooley, Matt Zimbel, Art Avalos.

A slice of three-day music fest

By MIHKEL JURIMA

The barriers of conventional jazz sound were smashed with good fun and progressive experimentation last Thursday in the Winters College Junior Common Room. The three-day York New Music Festival included Blue Rodeo's infamous keyboardist/acrobat Bob Wiseman and his accomplices John Oswald (saxophone) and Wayne Cass (guitar).

The trio's improvisational show raised many eyebrows. Bob Wiseman did all that he usually does with Blue Rodeo and then some. As always, you not only heard the music, but you could feel and see his elbows, arms, and body pound away at the piano. Wiseman played both

the piano and the body of the piano, knocking the wood, pulling a popcan across the strings, borrowing a metal cup from the guitarist to run up and down the strings. Occasionally letting out a few screams, he added to the excitement and created an ominous effect.

The guitar and saxophone played in the background, adding rhythm and occasional noise, such as the toss of a cup onto the floor. The guitar provided a screaming pitch and the sax was played in fast, short bursts.

York's own Derknarbles opened for the afternoon show. This quintet says that they "are dedicated to the jazz form, with some unexpected twists."

The group began with a slow,

steady drum and sax duo and then flared into a full swing with guitar, bass, and trumpet blasting. The band had a steady, swinging jazz rhythm, with plenty of instrument variation, allowing the listener to enjoy the trumpet itself or simply the cool pulse of the guitar and bass line.

The Derknarbles, consisting of Harry Pipher (drums), Rob Clutton (bassist), Ian Craig (guitar), Ravia Poliah (trumpet), and Corey Manders (sax), performed a grooving, fun set. Staying more with the roots and traditions of jazz, they provided smooth listening.

The two performances were progressive and provocative. The York New Music Festival is an event to look forward to if it becomes an annual event.

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