

## The joy of sax

**Leora Aisenberg**

To this very enthusiastic but somewhat unsophisticated music lover, the word "saxophonist" conjures an image of a lonely soul playing a sleazy lament to a few late night stragglers in a seedy downtown bar. Someone who looks like Zoot on the Muppet Show. Paul Brodie, however, does not fit into this stereotype. At York last week to play for and speak to music students, Brodie brought a contagious *joie de vivre* to this interpretation of how classical music should be played on the saxophone.

Brodie, having appeared in over 1500 concerts and compiled 21 records in his career, is one of the most experienced and well-known saxophonists in North America. Brodie advocates communication with an audience, claiming that "performers at concerts are so bloody serious all the time." He noted that if a musician has fun while performing, the enjoyment will spread to the audience. And it does.

Playing both the soprano and alto saxophone, Brodie enticed the audience with a few goodies

from his musical grab bag. After playing, he spoke to the students about his own experience as a professional musician. Originally a member of a dance band in high school, Brodie went on to get a BA in Music Education, and his MA in woodwind instruments. One major influence in his life was Marcel Mule, the great saxophonist under whom he studied in the Paris conservatory.



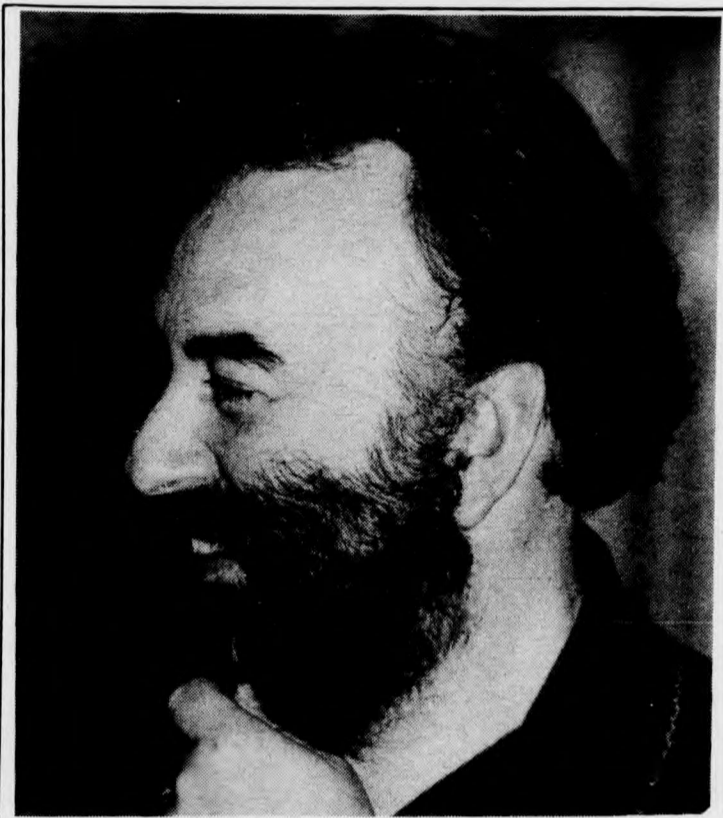
Brodie warns that it takes more than talent and intense practice to make it in the arts. "You shouldn't go into any field of performance with stars in your eyes," he said. Brodie recommends that students interested in becoming musicians also learn typing, public speaking, and "commando tactics." One of his main criticisms of professional musicians is that too many remain myopic, oblivious to all other art forms but their own. Brodie himself has been

involved in other areas of entertainment, including the film *Heaven Can Wait*, with Warren Beatty. Beatty had heard some of Brodie's records, and chose him to play the score of the picture. As well as proving to be an immense boost to his career, Brodie's role in movieland provided him with a lot of fun and a seat at the Academy Awards, where the film was nominated for best musical score. Recently, Brodie appeared as one of a quartet in *Circle of Two*, a soon-to-be-released film, starring Richard Burton and Tatum O'Neal.

Although he has achieved international acclaim, the saxophonist has few illusions where success is concerned. "I'm able to present what I do and people like it," he explained. Brodie still performs in such places as Perth, Cornwall and Parry Sound, places "where they have never even heard of a classical saxophonist." He added that a musician cannot be a true artist if his "be all and end all is to make a few bucks." In all likelihood, Brodie had to play his share of cliched blues in seedy bars, just to

make ends meet. But somewhere in there was the tune of celebra-

tion, just dying to get out. Zoot, look out.



Paul Brodie's *joie de vivre*: no boundaries for this saxman.

## bissett is brilliyint

**Michael Monastyrskyj**

bill bissett is one of the more recognizable names in Canadian poetry, and as he proved during last Friday's reading at Calumet College, the poet's reluctance to use capital letters isn't the only reason for his fame.

Pulling out a rattle from his knapsack, bissett began the performance with a tribal chant which soon gave way to poetry from his book, *Sailor*.

This collection deals with a variety of themes from LOOS UNICORNS to the wondrousfulness of the mounties and their secret police. It is in the latter poem that we find one of the poet's better lines: its mor than musical th ride they taking us all on

According to bissett, "A few Conservative politicians took part of my work out of context and used it to score points in bible belt ridings." The poet feels relieved that the Conservatives did not win the federal election.

Ironically, most of the offended politicians came from British Columbia, a province sometimes thought of as a Canadian California. The poet explains that the region is polarized between liberals and traditionalists. "We don't have the Liberal thing you have here in Ontario. That (the Liberal party) tends to smooth things out."

bissett didn't confine his political opinions to Canada. Saying that he was in favor of disarmament, the artist stated that the United States and the Soviet Union should start presenting machine guns one at a time to the United Nations. The

metal could then be melted down and fashioned into a giant solar generating station. He wasn't speaking tongue-in-cheek.

It is this contrast between insight and innocence which makes bill bissett and his work so engaging.

## Afternoon, a muse

**Joanne Sisto**

Another Tuesday on cold Prairie Campus and in the halls of Stong, strange chanting, screaming and other signs of general buffoonery can be heard. What's going in there? Poetry. What? That's p-o-e-t-r-y—no typographical error.

It isn't always so much fun, but this week York's own budding proteges, Colin Smith, Stuart Ross, Andy Payne and Steven Hatfield livened Sylvester's Lounge. The reading excavated the remains—mostly bones—of Willy the shake, served them to us, and later we stirred our drinks with them or digested them whole. Huh? Mr. Payne, for example, renowned for his delectable brand of poetry—criticism, performed an oral autopsy on Irving Layton, exploring his parts before rigormortis could set in. Beautifully read, Payne's other poems were reminiscent of Wallace Stevens, but were unique enough to be called his own. His last poem of the day, about the "a" in afternoon, was very well done.

Stuart Ross, emerging from the wilds of Sound Poetry (it's a jungle), gave a strong performance. Ross used bizarre images sparingly, never jumbling a thought with too many pictures. For this reason his poetry was

effectively disturbing, creating images that may return to haunt one three weeks later on the 11 o'clock bus.

Stephen Hatfield is not for persnickety palates. He performed "tasteless vulgarities" in song form. This was not his weakness, however. His poems may have been good but his presentation was so theatrical and even glib, that it detracted from his words.

## Blimke: Blimke

**Steve Blimkie and the Reason (Ready)**

You've probably never heard Steve Blimkie and the Reason on the radio. But the minute you play it, you're sure you have. It's that kind of record.

While not a total ripoff, it just reworks the old proven licks into functional danceable R n R. Blimkie is the kind of guy whose been taking AM too seriously. Costello can use the genre while rising above it. Blimkie doesn't seem as lucky.

This music is definitely not the stuff of Rock and Roll Suicide. At best, you'll be singing along with it as you drive to your aunt's for dinner. They probably used a calculator to make sure.

## Take heart, Cabaret

**Mike Fisher**

Douglas Brown, an Artistic Director of York's Cabaret series, has written and directed a show entitled *Fired Through the Heart*, in which he takes aim at a retiring, parochial and self-conscious community: us.

The setting is confined to a fictional bar called Sightlines, where five employees suffer the popular angst of wondering why they have to work and what job they might have in the future. One unlucky character is fated to recall, endlessly, exactly how many hours and how much money he spent acquiring his university degree. Dancers move helplessly to the sounds of Pink Floyd's "Another brick in the wall" and "We don't need no education." A woman's life is invaded by her tyrannical old kindergarten teacher. "Unlike any of the other Cabaret shows this year, this one follows a story line," notes Brown. "And there is even a surprise ending." Here is a work which defines the spirit of our age.

This cabaret presentation will be followed by two more productions this term. One is a nightclub show. Brown describes the other as a "full-length extravaganza," for which two students will complete the music and choreography through individualized courses.

Brown is enthusiastic about cabaret being incorporated into student programmes, and has several proposals whereby it could be improved. First, he suggests that a choreographer be added to the staff. "Caroline Smith, a veteran of CBC's *Superspecial*, did the work for my show—but she volunteered her time." He also thinks that the staff should be chosen before the summer. "We'd have four months to plan shows, rather than three weeks," he explains.

The second phase of his proposal is to make Cabaret a stepping stone for students, to get them out into a public other than the York community. He would like to see a children's theatre established, "so we could take it to schools, especially those where York education students teach classes." He would also like to make arrangements with clubs like Yuk Yuk's to create performing opportunities in the outside community.

"I want to stress the point that people are too safe in this environment, especially theatre performers," says Brown, seated by a window in Vanier residence. "When they leave, many students expect a sudden transition, from classes to professionalism. But it doesn't happen." As he looks out the window, a large white cloud drifts by. He shifts uncomfortably in his chair. "We're too isolated up here," he says guiltily.

*Fired Through the Heart* will play in the MacLaughlin Hall on March 20, 21st at 8:30 and 10 p.m. Admission is free. For reservations of 6 or 7, call Douglas Brown at 667-6031 or his co-director Dorothy Tenute at 667-6074.



To give a review of bissett's poetry would be unfair, because you must experience his art to understand it. Much of what he has to say is not original in itself and as a result his work depends on his unique presentation. When written the originality comes largely from his unorthodox spelling and verse arrangement.

The lack of obvious meaning in much of his work has created friction between bissett and some federal members of parliament, and as a result, the artist's blowpointment press was temporarily denied Canada Council grants.

Rumour has it through that he's blow away in concert.

Ska Mann

But in Concert

And he is!!! Don't listen to critics. Steve Blimkie gave a super performance at Massey Hall, opening for XTC, last Monday.

Vanier College Council is presenting a St. Patrick's Dance featuring STEVE BLIMKIE AND THE REASON, with guests OSBIE FEEL on Wed. March 19 at 8:00 p.m. in the Vanier Dining Hall. There will be various door prizes and giveaways, including albums and T-shirts. COST FOR ADMISSION is \$3.00 for all comers.

Best Boy