

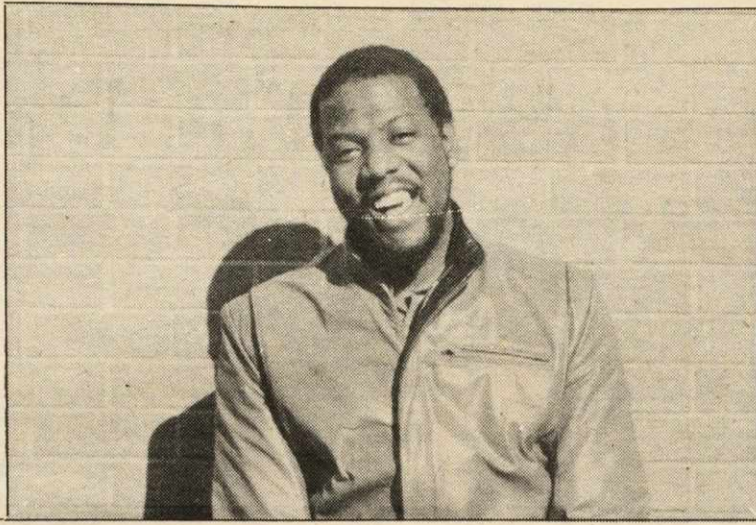
Harvey Millar And His Electric Tamboo

Review by Chris Armstrong

Last Friday, Nov. 18 at 12:30 the St. Mary's Art Gallery continued its popular and long-running series of shows in the performing arts vein (affectionately known as *Lunch with Art*) with the music of Caribbean/Halligonian singer-guitarist Harvey Millar. Mr. Millar came to Halifax several years ago from Saint Lucia, in the Caribbean islands. He has been playing for many years in a wide variety of styles, both of his native country and of North America. As a result of these eclectic influences he has developed a unique approach to music that is a blend of reggae and jazz, folk, calypso, and cumbance; the last being a form of Caribbean music based on the strong rhythms of the *tamboo*, a Creole drum.

At this particular concert at St. Mary's, the rhythms were provided, not by the Creole *tamboo*, but by a fellow Harvey called "my little friend here, who's doing his best." His friend was, indeed, a rhythm box, a good backup for the purposes of the concert but still not ideal for a music that depends so heavily on its rhythmic vitality. Harvey quipped about the box throughout the concert, but was never completely at ease with it.

His great skill as guitarist and



singer shone throughout, however, and once the audience got past the mechanical nature of his accompanist and started settling into the infectious groove of the music, the concert just kept getting better and better.

The first couple of numbers, although hampered by his initial trouble with the box, showed Harvey's immediate vocal command over the material as he swung through "I Shot the Sheriff" and reggae-ized the pop standard "Masquerade." His equal love for Bossa-type jazz and extended acoustic guitar

improvisation was apparent with "Girl from Ipanema" and that much-loved jazz warhorse "Green Dolphin Street."

In a post-concert interview Harvey named jazz guitarists Wes Montgomery, Charlie Christian, and Charlie Byrd (although he called the last "a bit clichéd") as major influences, and when I asked him about vocal favourites, Al Jarreau's name came out like a bullet: "I buy all of his albums." And Bob Marley: "He was responsible for putting Jamaica on the map through his music ... Bob Marley still lives on."

And so Bob Marley tunes

played a prominent part in the concert, and the lyrics came in a jazz-blues inflected drawl, and with the eyes shut: "You're

gonna lively up yourself, and don't be no drag, / Lively up yourself, cause reggae is another bag ..."

"With eyes closed?" I asked, "Does it help you concentrate?"

"Yes," he said, "it takes a lot of concentration to play with a perfect drummer (strange paradox), but also, I close my eyes when the music sends me." All kinds of music sends Harvey Millar; as the concert continued, we were treated in succession to a talking blues, a calypso jam, and a bossa nova meditation. The switch from acoustic to electric and back again occurred several times. He soloed on both, but today it seemed to be the acoustic which particularly "sent" him, especially in such romantic tunes as "The Day the World Stopped Turning," another mellow and jazz-influenced number.

The one true *cadence* song on the program was undoubtedly the highlight of the afternoon. This was not social commentary, but a simple story of a man and a woman in a garden. His introduction set the mood:

"This song is entitled 'Pas Fait Ca,' which is 'Don't Do That.' It

is a Dominican song, about ... there's this man, who goes up to his garden and comes across this woman who is also working in garden, and she tries to ... woo him. So, the sun is shining bright, and it's kind of hot, so he's kind of trying to hold back. The song is being sung in Creole, which is not proper French, so we call it *patois*."

There was a group of senior citizens at the concert who had come in for a tour of the gallery, and, as I found out afterwards from talking to Harvey, it's probably bet that none of them seemed to understand Creole. But the good feeling of the whole concert was certainly not lost on any member of the audience, especially the very young members, two of whom danced happily throughout the hour, oblivious of the several bemused watchers on both sides of the room. Had it been a little less stodgy and inhibited, I probably would have joined them. They had the right idea.

Concerts and performances in the *Lunch with Art* series are advertised campus- and city-wide on posters bearing yellow triangles, and also announced weekly on CKDU. How about that. One more reason to keep your ear on Dal Radio.

Will this man be their next President?

Glenn: The Astronaut Who Would Be President
by Frank Van Riper
1983, 360 pages, \$18.95

Review by Geoff Martin

Sometimes Glenn reads like a superficial feature interview, which may not be surprising, as it was written by Frank Van Riper, a staffwriter for the *New York Daily News*.

The book suffers from many shortcomings although it contains a good deal of information concerning Senator John Glenn and his political views.

The most significant weakness lies in its misplaced emphasis.

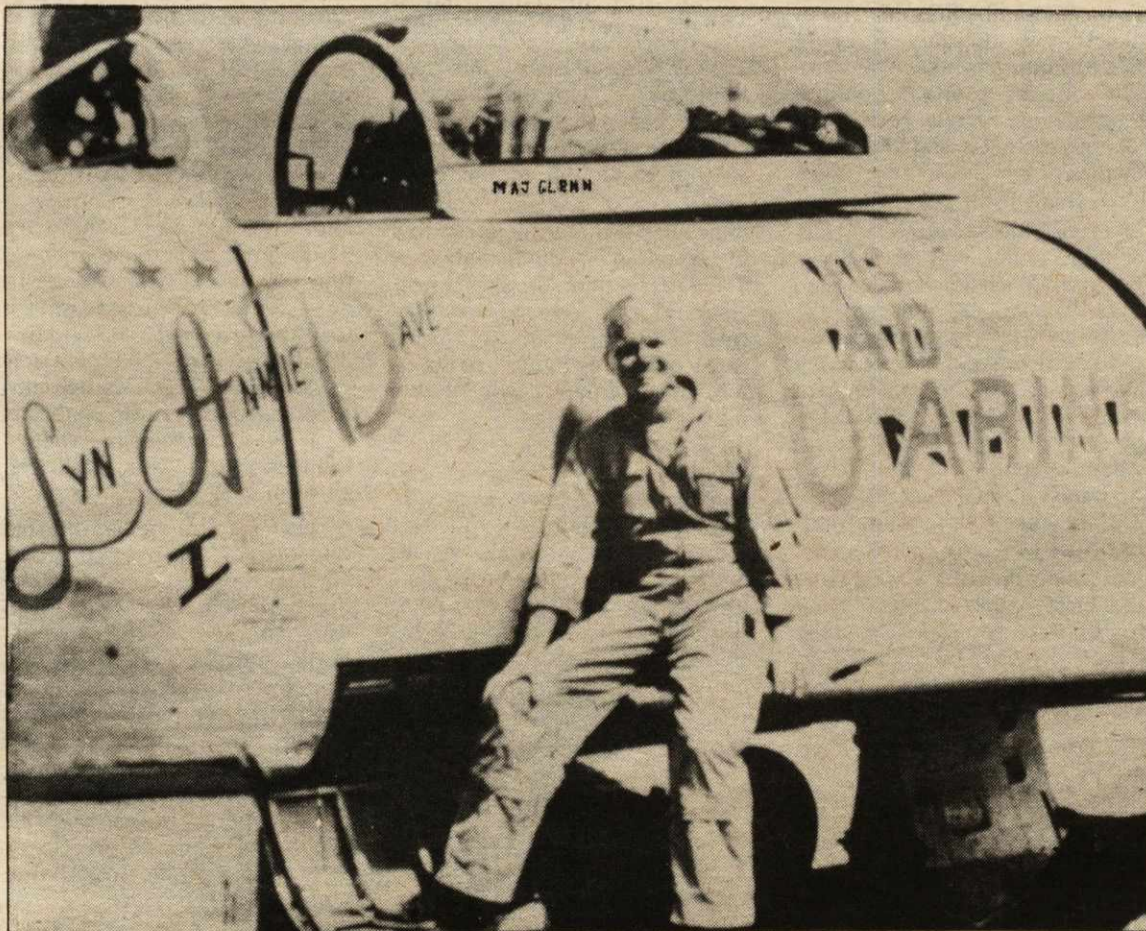
A biography of John Glenn—U.S. Senator from Ohio, war hero in World War Two and Korea, and the first American to orbit the Earth—is important today because he is a candidate for the Democratic nomination for President.

We would have been better served if Van Riper had concentrated on politics rather than the adulation which he frequently lapses into.

Glenn has been sitting in the U.S. Senate for just over 8 years now, certainly the most important 8 years of his life so far as his Presidential candidacy is concerned. Van Riper provides only spotty coverage of what Glenn has done there. Only 70 pages are spent on his years in the Senate, while the author otherwise seems content to tell us about John Glenn the living legend.

He draws randomly on Glenn's voting record, rather than print a partial record of Glenn's votes in an appendix.

In his chapter "Years in the Senate: Liberal or Centrist?" the



The "MiG Mad Marine". Fighter Glenn poses with the F-86 in which he downed three MiG's during the Korean War.

author has real trouble whitewashing Glenn's more conservative moves. His votes in favour of the Reagan economic program, new binary nerve gas, and the B-1 bomber are not the votes of a Senate liberal.

"In a recent attempt to solidify his anti-crime credentials, Glenn has advocated abolishing virtually all parole for criminals," Van Riper writes, letting it slip quickly by. But the Senate conservatives

will not accept Glenn because of his very liberal social views, especially on issues like abortion.

Van Riper's portrait of Glenn shows him to be a man who differs from President Reagan in degree but not in substance. Like most of the Democratic hopefuls, his stand on the "nuclear freeze" is shaky at best.

As for the issue of intervention in Latin America, "Glenn plainly asserts that any American Presi-

dent, faced with a situation where 'all Latin America was going Communist,' would have to meet such a challenge by sending in American troops," Van Riper writes.

At some points in the book, the author comes off like Glenn's publicity director, with his "moving" descriptions of Glenn's life of hard work, frugality, and perseverance.

The book is important

because it helps us see part of the dilemma in American politics.

More so than in Canada, the United States is politically paralyzed. There is little political diversity in those who offer for high public office through the two parties. One in fact wonders whether those who do hold diverse views, like George McGovern, can ever get a fair shake.

Van Riper has succeeded at least partly in showing us the real John Glenn, despite the fact that the book is a little top-heavy with his military and out space careers, and of his close connections with Bobby and John Kennedy.

Edith Butler

Edith Butler is one of the few performers who truly knows how to talk to an audience. Backed by her superb musicians—Andre Proulx, Jean-Marie Benoit, Richard Provencal and Claude Arsenault, Edith will sing, play a multitude of musical instruments, chant and generally captivate any audience who has the fortune to see her.

Although new songs have been added to her show, the public may still count on hearing their old favourites and seeing Edith's renowned, small wooden friend, the dancing Gabriel Deusse.

Tickets are available at the Dalhousie Arts Centre Box Office, 424-2298.