

Are you experienced?

by Ian Holloway

"Are You Experienced" is the first album by the Jimi Hendrix Experience. It contains not so much hard music as heavy music. This debut album established Hendrix as an important force in late '60's rock and roll.

Jimi Hendrix is widely regarded as the rock guitarist. Even a guitar giant such as Eric Clapton (who himself was the subject of much adulation. In London in 1965 someone erected a billboard that read simply Clapton Is God.) worshipped him. He said of his supergroup Cream; "We had nights where you could have mistaken us for Hendrix, it was that good, and others where it was like the worst band in the world." Since his death of a drug overdose in 1970, Jimi Hendrix has become somewhat of a cult hero. Albums of just about every scrap of music he recorded have surfaced in one form or another.

Like many cult heroes, Hendrix had a simple background. He was raised in typical American suburbia, getting his first electric guitar at 13. In the early 1960's he joined the US Army as a paratrooper. After a stint of about 2 years he was discharged because of a severely broken leg. It was then that he entered the pop music field as a backup guitarist for the Isley Brothers. Gradually he began to make a name for himself as a hotshot guitar player. Former Animals (of Eric Burdon fame) bassist Chas Chandler told him if he came to England he would make him a star.

It was there that Hendrix formed the Experience with bassist Noel Redding and drummer Mitch Mitchell. The Experience was wildly successful in the UK. Hendrix stunned audiences by playing with his teeth and behind his back. Being left handed, he used a right handed guitar strung backwards. Eventually, the Experience's fame spread across the Atlantic and the first album, "Are You Experienced" was released.

The album opens with what is probably one of the two best known of Hendrix's songs, "Purple Haze" (the other being his version of Dylan's "All Along The Water-tower"). It is pure hard rock. From the opening metallic chords Hendrix leads the listener into a cloudy world where everything is obscured by a purple haze. It was with this song, along with "The Star Spangled Banner", that Hendrix captured the audience at Woodstock.

The next song, "Manic Depression", can be seen as a remarkable, if unknowing piece of foresight. Hendrix sings of manic depression capturing his soul, and of not knowing how to get what he wants. Later on, as Hendrix became more dissatisfied, he disbanded the Experience. Attempts were made to reform it but they failed. He even formed another group, The Band Of Gypsies, but that too failed. Hendrix became increasingly frustrated with his music and fell into a deep depression. Insiders say that things were just beginning to look up when he so tragically died.

Following are "Hey Joe" and "May This Be Love", songs which prove those who classify Hendrix as an "electric demon" wrong. They are both love songs, yet backed by a fluid guitar piece and a tasteful bass line.

Two of the best songs from the second side are "Fire" and "Foxy Lady". Interestingly they are both songs which earned him much notoriety. Hendrix's first US tour was made backing none other than the Monkees, and hard rockers such as these did not endear Hendrix to the type of audience that the Monkees attracted. The tour was cut short on the premise that the Daughters of The American Revolution protested against his overt sexuality. This in itself was an astute bit of publicity work.

The album ends with the title cut. It poses the rhetorical question are you experienced? If so, then you can join Hendrix on his journey through psychedelia. Indeed, it is probably the most psychedelic of all Hendrix' songs. It is written in the same vein as the Beatles' "Strawberry Fields Forever" and the Stones' "2000 Light Years From Home". Backward guitar tracks abound (a trick, incidentally, which the Beatles had been using since 1966), and the song features a fade in at the end a la "Strawberry Fields".

Jimi Hendrix is remembered not so much for the songs he wrote. He preferred much more to play other people's songs, preferably with those other people; he and Lennon did "Day Trip-



per", and he and Dylan did "Like A Rolling Stone". Nor is he remembered for what he said in those songs as the lyrics are not that profound. Indeed, most of his songs were just vehicles for his guitar playing.

This is what he is remembered for. Hendrix made sounds come out of his guitar

that had never been heard before. He could literally make it "howl and move". He was a guitar genius, and it is pointless trying to choose which of his songs have good guitar work because they all had such fantastic guitar. "Are You Experienced" is definitely an experience not to be missed.

Wantuck at Dal Art Gallery

Women in the arts

by Eleanor Austin

Women have always been at a disadvantage but things are finally getting better, says Karen Wantuck, a feminist artist from Atlanta, Georgia, U.S.A.

Wantuck gave a slide-lecture demonstration Thursday, at the Dalhousie Art Gallery to a crowd of about 20, of whom half expected to see "Women in the Arts" and the others expected to see Judiac costumes. She presented both although she announced her preference for "Women in the Arts".

The demonstration began with 19th century women artists, a time when women were not permitted entry into art school.

According to Wantuck, most slides of women's paintings are in black and white because publishers were apprehensive about spending the money needed to reproduce the pages for women's art in colour fearing the books would not sell.

Wantuck explained that women in the 18th and 19th centuries lived under male domination which exerted certain pressures and restraints on the woman.

Many women led a bohemian life, one of distraction and on the fringes of society but the women who became well known gave up the responsibilities of a wife and a mother to become a recluse and paint or to be a sculptor, she said.

It was not until 1850 that women could go to a school of art and not until 1893 could she study art form from a real person.

Prior to that women had to stay in the house. If her desire to paint was strong enough she could study works from books. It has been a struggle for women all the way, Wantuck added.

For a woman's painting to be called masculine in the earlier centuries showed respect for her work and it was a compliment of the highest acclaim, Wantuck said. One

American female artist was criticized for having painted a feminine scene. It was a combination of jewelry so she then reputed the criticism by painting a disarrayed display of cigars, ashtrays, coins and bills to show her interpretation of masculinity.

Many paintings of women artists showed the virtuous women whom the men respected, Wantuck said. They often demonstrate the superior woman's role being that of the conqueror.

The paintings of the reknown Dutch artist Judith Leyster were compared with those of Franz Hall, another acclaimed artist. Wantuck said this was a compliment but when the critics realized Leyster was a woman, her paintings were immediately denounced inferior to those of Hall, she said.

"We have lots of unfinished business," Wantuck said, quoting the woman artist Georgia O'Keefe.

Staff Meeting Thursday at 7:00



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