

# JAZZ!!

## Part I: fantasy, vision and flavours

BY AINSLEY CRAWLEY

It's 1939 and you have a front row seat to see the Count at the Savoy Theatre in Chicago. He struts the stage and begins the boogie; a long piano roll with, his big band. *Da do do do Da da da da dahhhhhhh...* goes the piano, skipping. The rest of the 25 piece band kicks in and you hear all the instruments in harmony.

It's 1999 and you are at an indoor stadium in Ohio with Q — Quincy Jones — as the M.C. The crowd is expectant and over-anxious. Incense stuffs your nose with exotic fragrances. "Its their last show and reunion just for you great fans," says Mr. Jones. Three tidy Texans take to the stage and Q claps with the entire crowd.

It isn't the Beatles but the Crusaders, and you're thrilled. The room fills with funky beats, haunting, saucy bass lines and exotic warm electric piano and the rest is just for you and a lucky few to savour.

Oh yeah, and a few choice dudes join the band to help out. Grover, Najee, Larry Carlton, Herbie and Al Jarreau. New flavours, old flavours. The jazz of today is exciting and has a legacy that dates back to the music of the New Orleans marching bands of the 1820's. Joe Sample has just played two flourishes and is looking warm and sounding lush and mellow on piano.

Steady time from Stix Hooper and vamps by Wilton Felder. We'll just chill for a few of the band's oldies like Greasy Spoon and River Rat.

Miles Davis did it all in jazz and was a cultural hero and musical legend in 1969. He could have avoided risks and spent the rest of his life under lucrative music contracts from CBS records, living as one of America's celebrity millionaires. The Avante Garde was firmly in place and dying commercially.

But the torch touched his soul, and Miles got hip. Not only was the music in the 60's "bad" and "radical," it was a new forum for cultural expression based on post-modernism.

Miles went radical and wore an Afro and Dishiki's in place of his exclusive French/Italian collection of suits and ties. Miles was changin'.

Jazz was music without a name at the beginning of this century. Jazz was a word used by modernists back then to describe deviant behaviour such as drinking, promiscuity, gambling and other fad phases of life. People often said "I was jazzed" or "jazzin". The looseness of the

Ragtime culture and the new popularity of jazz led the two to become synonymous. Jazz is kinky music, and the name has stuck ever since.

The Crusaders are joined by others of the fusion set. Barbieri, Hank Crawford, Marcus Miller, David Sanborn, Roy Ayers and former Crusader Wayne Henderson. The music is just too bold, and solos by saxophone over a nice bed of raw Texas groove can't lose. Sanborn and Grover trading licks over lyrical lines. Retro-spectin' beyond. Najee and Hank picking up what is left for more wisps of pure and simple pleasure. Each one's style compliments the other and that of our beloved Crusaders.

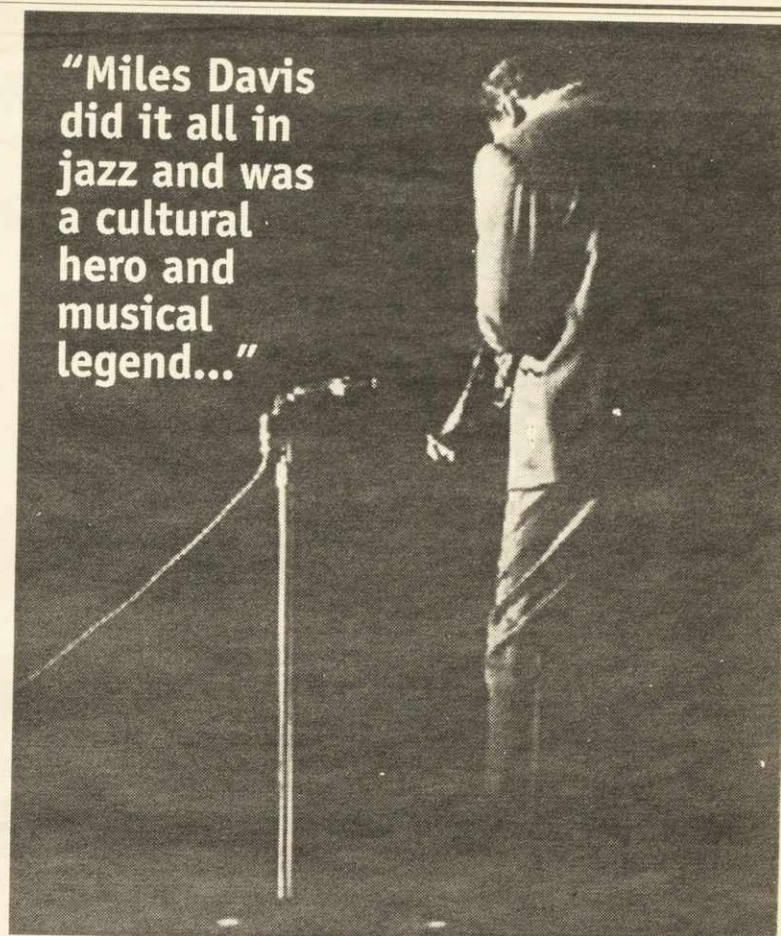
The lights dim and Herbie

Hancock is lighted at a set of keyboards. George Duke uses a multi synthesizer network to manufacture sound. Herbie does piano to a slower gradual beat and the band kicks in; he drops phrases and you wait. The feeling grows and George Duke adds syrupy, heavy synthesizer phrases and the sound warps to a flashy groove. This is the ultimate Jazz experience.

Q returns to the stage with his beloved trumpet and blows a neat solo. Freddie Hubbard and Roy Hargrove Join Mr J. momentarily on stage.

Part 2 of this fictional article will appear in next week's Gazette. Check out Ainsley's Jazz show on CKDU Radio.

"Miles Davis did it all in jazz and was a cultural hero and musical legend..."

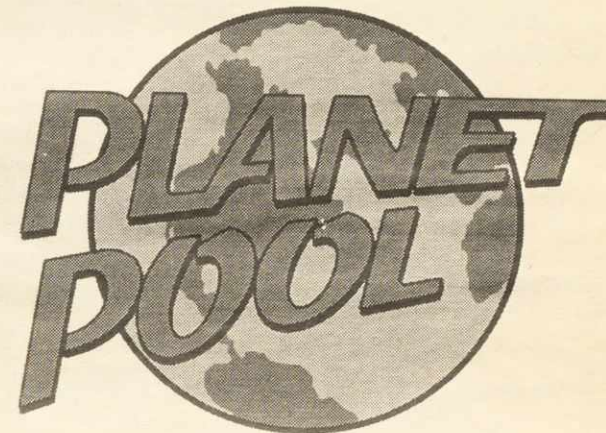


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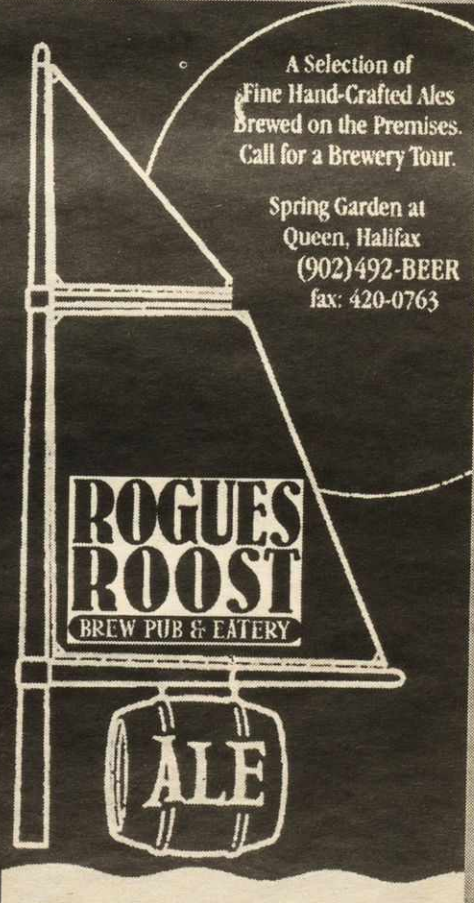
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