

Jazz Feast on the Way

GEORGIA STRAIGHT JUNE 17, 1988

With only two weeks to go until the opening of the third annual du Maurier International Jazz Festival, public interest and ticket sales are heating up, so now's the time to plan your festival itinerary if you want to avoid missing out on some

Off Beat

ALEX VARTY

of the most soulfully creative music ever heard around these parts. To help you pick out a schedule, here are capsule summaries of some of the "don't miss" events that the festival has in store.

Certainly you won't want to miss the gala opening on Friday, June 24 at the Expo Theatre: ex-Weather Report leader Joe Zawinul's aptly named **Zawinul Syndicate** should be explosive, with rhythm demons Cornell Rochester and Gerald Veasley driving a band that's primed to cover all the bases, from bebop to 21st-century funk; while Senegalese singer **Youssou N'Dour** has one of the finest bands to emerge from the Third (or any other) World, plus an impassioned, often heartbreakingly beautiful vocal delivery.

Three under-appreciated pianists should provide some of the festival's finest hours: veterans **Andrew Hill** and **Horace Tapscott** and re-

woman, a New York resident, adds elements of the Afro-Cuban tradition to her similarly complete understanding of the jazz piano. She's a sparkingly powerful soloist and for this tour has assembled an equally bright band, featuring saxophone lions Gary Thomas and Greg Osby, bassist Lonnie Plaxico, and the prodigious young drummer Terri Lynne Carrington, all members of the new generation of New York-based jazz extenders. At the Vancouver East Cultural Centre on June 30.

In only three years the du Maurier festival has already established a worldwide reputation as one of the places to hear the jazz avant-garde, and three concerts in that idiom that should not be missed are **George Lewis's** solo recital at the Western Front (June 27), the double-bill of **Semantics** with the **Lussier/Derome/Cora** trio at the VECC (July 1), and the **Ornette Coleman/Lunar Adventures** package at the Commodore on July 3.

Lewis is an outstanding trombone technician, a master of contemporary approaches to his instrument, and also a pioneer in the uncharted waters of computer music. When he puts the two together, the results can be bizarrely unpredictable, or blissfully lovely, but always eminently musical.

Semantics is one of the wildest groups playing the

festival. With New Yorkers Samm Bennett, Ned Rothenberg, and Elliott Sharp on board, their influences run the gamut from Japanese shakuhachi music to Yoruba drumming to Jimi Hendrix. Perversely humorous and infinitely inventive, their range and scope has boosted them out of the improvising underground and onto the avant-punk record label SST, where they can be heard stretching out on music that's radical, rhythmic, and memorably melodic. Multi-instrumentalists Rene Lussier, Jean Derome (from Montreal), and Tom Cora (from New York) will open with a set that's sure to be similarly intense and surprising.

The Vancouver band **Lunar Adventures**, arguably this city's most interesting "fusion" ensemble, will unleash its spiky chops as a fitting appetizer for the latest edition of Ornette Coleman's controversial Prime Time outfit, which now apparently includes a tabla player, but will be without flash bassist Jamaaladeen Tacuma, out on the road with his own band. Ornette is always interesting—whether you think he's a genius or not—and our consensus is that he is. There's no denying that few other artists can match his scope, from acoustic quartet jazz to avant-funk to full-scale symphonic works.

If something a little more

straightforward is calling you, hear the **Horace Parlan/Archie Shepp** duet instead (also on July 3, but at the VECC at 8 p.m.). Shepp, one of the '60s jazz radicals who came up in Coleman's wake, has mellowed remarkably, and along with the rich-sounding pianist Parlan, now flexes his considerable saxophone capabilities on vintage blues, gospel, and Bird numbers that sing and swing with warmth, humour, and quiet fire.

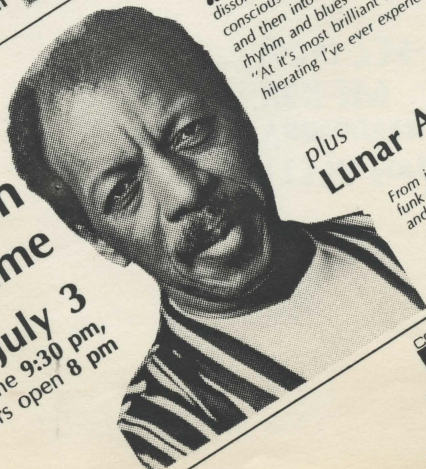
Two bands led from the rhythm section but long on saxophone talent will explore the modern approaches to the jazz tradition at the VECC on June 29: local drummer **Claude Ranger** will lead a three-horned quintet (Perry White, Rob Frayne, and Phil Dwyer will blow, Skywalk's Rene Worst will bass) that could be mightily impressive, while ex-Ornette bassist **Charlie Haden**, one of the world's most musical human beings and a poetically beautiful player, will work with ex-Rolling Stones sax sideman Ernie Watts, pianist Alan Broadbent, and drummer Paul Motian in an ensemble that should, theoretically, be able to do just about anything from the deep blues to the most abstract pointillisms.

And, finally, for more magnificent African singing, catch **Salif Keita**, with Themba Tana's **African Heritage** at the

Sat.
July 2

doors 8 pm
showtime
10 pm

Ornette
Coleman
& Prime Time
Sunday, July 3
showtime 9:30 pm,
doors open 8 pm



plus
Lunar Adventures
From jazz and harmolodic
funk to Celtic
and Calypso...

"... Coleman stretches out in abstract, dissonant configurations, riding a stream of consciousness, with invigorating plunges now and then into the depths of Muddy Waters, or into juicy rhythm and blues licks." Hartford Courant.
"At it's most brilliant the music was the most exhilarating I've ever experienced." Chicago Sun-Times

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du MAURIER INTERNATIONAL JAZZ F

TICKETS: VTC/CBO, Eatons, Woodwards, Mall Infocentres, Black Swan Reco
JAZZ HOTLINE 682-0706.

All Commodore shows (July 1, 2, 3) plus 86 Street shows (June 25 & 28) incl
On sale at Black Swan, Highlife, VTC/CBO 280-3311.

