

Jazz fest gets record crowd; k.d. is mooded

JAZZ AT THE PLAZA helped the fifth annual **du Maurier International Jazz Festival** reach a new attendance high, according to festival artistic director **Ken**

RANDOM

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Pickering. Festival attendance had already been boosted by the new Gastown Jazz weekend and the big shows at the civic theatres, and Pickering estimates that attendance could reach 115,000 when the figures are all tallied. "Last year we were around 92,000, but I know this year we're over 100," he said. The three days of free concerts, which wrapped up Monday (July 2) at the former Expo site, ranged from the hardcore Chicago blues of Charlie Musselwhite to the free-form tragi-comedy of **Phil Minton and Roger Turner** (imagine a packed house of enthusiasts applauding a balloon solo as if it were a scorching saxophone break). The Plaza programming is one of the jazz festival's assets, exposing such local acts as **Lunar Adventures** and **Garbo's Hat** to a new audience and introducing us to such pleasures as the intricately interwoven music of the **Maarten Altena Octet** (a festival highlight) and the pan-cultural buoyancy of **Pierre Dorge's New Jungle Orchestra**. All was not entirely well at the Jazz at the Plaza site, however. At the end of the Altena octet's Sunday set, a curtain rail 40 feet above the Discovery Theatre's stage gave way, and a waterfall of heavy black fabric descended towards the floor. No one was hurt, but pianist **Randy Weston's** concert set was delayed for three hours and moved to the outdoor Plaza stage, where he played brilliantly. Bad sound and other logistical problems hurt the event, though, and constant comings and goings in the Discovery Theatre audience prompted one frustrated performer to quip that he felt "like a travel agent". However, Pickering says this year was a good one for Canadian musicians. "We had some major talent buyers in from the U.K., Japan, and the U.S., and they were all really impressed with what they heard." Other unannounced visitors included **Syd Straw** who sat in with the **Jazz Passengers** for two songs at its Vancouver East Cultural Centre show...**AT THE SOUND** of the moo, you're a winner. That's the message of Calgary radio station CFAC, which is taking a novel approach to the **k.d. lang** controversy currently stewing in Alberta's cattle country. Seems like some big sky burghers were steamed by lang's "meat stinks" radio ads for the American People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) lobby, and they responded by getting at least one radio station to yank the country-politan singer's songs from the airwaves. But CFAC program director Bob Switzer is getting some prime ribbing from adding cow sounds to lang's singles: his station is giving four free steaks to the first listener who phones after they hear the heifer. No bull, folks...**STOMPIN' TOM CONNORS**, the Violent Femmes, and Vancouver's own **Hard Rock Miners?** All jamming together on stompin' classics like "Gumboot Cloggeroo" and "Bud the Spud"? This folk fan's dream (and musicologist's nightmare) became reality recently at Toronto's Mariposa Festival, where this unholy trinity found itself jamming in the festival hotel's hospitality suite. Miner Mike Turner reports that his band also sold out its post-Mariposa concert dates, in the wake of further sessions with the likes of veteran folksinger Ed McCurdy, ace producer Daniel Lanois, and lovable lunatic Jonathan Richman, who showed up at his own concert wearing a Hard Rock Miners t-shirt. ■