

Jazz fest ends with upped attendance

AS OF Monday (June 29), attendance figures for the seventh annual **du Maurier International Jazz Festival** were being pegged at an estimated—and record-breaking—150,000, up from last year's 135,000. You'd think these figures would bring a smile to the face of Coastal Jazz and Blues Society marketing director John Orysik, and you'd be right, but, says the cherubic promo man, "The wonderful thing about this festival is that it's constantly keeping you off balance." You'd also think that after a week and a half of nearly 24-hour-a-day jazz, the CJBS crew would have had enough music for the summer, but no: after a week of juggling the books and tying up loose ends, the team goes off to soak in more sounds at the Montreal jazz fest...**JAZZ HISTORY** was laid out on key-

JAZZ '92 NOTES

boards all week at the Vancouver East Cultural Centre, but no one covered as much ground as pianist **Sir Roland Hanna**. Performing with master bassist **Richard Davis** on Thursday (June 25), Hanna displayed an effortlessly rhapsodic command of his instrument, moving from Debussy-like ballads to breakneck Charlie Parker standards to Billy Strayhorn's sublime "Isfahan". Davis, for his part, produced meaty plucked sounds, and alternately cello-like and unearthly bowed tones. Most importantly, the two veterans maintained constant, playful contact with each other and the enraptured audience. Expect to see the pair return soon: Davis and his nine-year-old daughter, Persia, were so smitten with B.C. they rented a mobile home to investigate our environs...**THE SILLIEST SHOW** in a sunny week of lunchtime Granville Island concerts was a Wednesday (June 24) visit from the **Angstones**, an Ottawa quintet dedicated to Slavic wedding songs, Gypsy jazz, hillbilly Klezmer, and mutant funk. The band's name might suggest Edvard Munch, but its visual presence was actually much closer to R. Crumb, with every member wearing fezzes or other eccentric headgear. Reedman **Peter Kiese-walter** and guitarist **Kurt Walther** did most of the singing, with the latter notable for his pseudo-Yiddish "Kommen Een Der Karz". This is also the title of the band's new album, which Kiese-walter says was sponsored by government grants and a Pittsburgh Penguins hockey star they happened to meet while playing at the wedding of the athlete's sister—in Czechoslovakia!...**VANCOUVERITES** have come to love **Katie Webster's** swampy brand of rhythm 'n' swing. But not many, it seems, anticipated that Webster's Thursday (June 25) thunder at the Commodore would be stolen by gospel singer **Marion Williams**. Williams' power-packed readings of traditional gospel material clearly stunned the crowd, thanks to the singer's sheer, good-natured authority and uplifting voice. By the end of her set, ordinarily secular music fans were weepily rushing the stage to shake the singer's hands and touch the hem of her garment...**HARRY CONNICK, JR.** may not be a true jazz hero, but his band sure ain't from slouchville, as several of its members proved at the Alma Street Cafe. After earlier gigs at the Orpheum, about half a dozen of Connick's sidemen visited with the **Joshua Breakstone Trio** on Friday (June 26), and even more showed up the next night to play tag-team with **Ross Taggart's** quartet. The doubly talented pianist/saxophonist's rhythm section was gradually replaced by Connick's, with **Russ Malone** outstanding on guitar. The amazing brass section of **Brad Lealy, Ned Gould, and Jerry Weldon** locked horns on fierce bop, blues, and a sweeping ballad medley until the wee hours came, as the lanky Taggart, all weary and beneficent smiles, looked on...**VANCOUVER JAZZ** is nothing if not incestuous, with many local players flitting between as many as five different bands. Saxophonist/composer **Coat Cooke's Evolution** is mostly made up of bandleaders, with trumpeter **John Korsrud**, guitarist **Ron Samworth**, and the sax/drum team of **Daniel Kane and Stan Taylor** all having their own gigs elsewhere in the fest. Pianist **Kathy Kidd** didn't show up for the Evolution's Saturday (June 27) gig at the sun-drenched Plaza of Nations, but with three horns, two guitars, and a dynamic rhythm section, there wasn't much missing from the band's aggressively harmolodic funk. Opening with its harshest, most extra-terrestrial material, the Evolution got everyone's attention, then proceeded to get more listener-friendly with increasingly beat-oriented material. ■

MUSIC • Patience and Planning Pay Off

Hard-working Roots Roundup happy with *What We Do*

BY COLIN SMITH

Ask working musicians about their careers "in the biz" and you're likely to hear complaints. The critics ignore us. Club owners and booking agents abuse us. The record labels have no interest in art. The music shop won't lease us equipment, we can't pay the rent on our rehearsal space (again), and the van needs a tune-up but deserves a death certificate. Why then, if so few artists survive this torturous existence, are so many others willing to try? Well, it sure beats working for a living, right?

It's just that kind of cynical, short-sighted attitude that drives guitarist Greg Hathaway to pull out his hair in

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frustration. Limitless patience and tireless planning have formed the foundation upon which his band, **Roots Roundup**, has built its impressive reputation.

In 1986, Hathaway, drummer Barry Taylor, and singer Dym E. Tree formed what was to become one of the hardest-working bands in Vancouver, if not the country. Today, **Roots Roundup** includes bass player Keith Rose, guitarist Mark Campbell, and keyboardist Ford Pier, all of whom also sing lead and background vocals. And although in the course of its 150 performances per year—including an upcoming Commodore Ballroom performance on Friday (July 10)—this outfit has experienced all the troublesome circumstances that normally accompany a less-than-meteoritic rise to stardom, its members remain wholeheartedly committed to their craft.

Why, after six years of personnel changes, cross-country tours, and independent releases, is **Roots Roundup** still in the game? Simply because the band loves to play. Its special blend of ska, reggae, folk, funk, and punk rock has earned it thousands of fans and the respect of its peers. Like Toronto's **Rheostatics**, Edmonton's **Jr. Gone Wild**, and a few other veterans, **Roots**



With its first CD, *What We Do*, in the stores and selling respectably, **Roots Roundup** casts its sights towards conquering the U.S. and Europe. Even the loss of co-founder and trombonist Dym E. Tree hasn't stalled the band's momentum.

Roundup remains a fine example of a uniquely Canadian approach to alternative rock. But the success the band has earned has not come without a few set-backs.

This spring, frontman Dym E. Tree left **Roots Roundup** just prior to the release of its debut CD, *What We Do*, and another six-week national tour. The popular singer and trombone player's surprise departure (due to personal reasons) may upset some fans, but Hathaway states unequivocally that 1992 signals the start of a fresh, exciting period for the band. Speaking from a sunny front porch in East Vancouver recently, Hathaway reveals the source of **Roots Roundup's** eternal optimism.

"We had to tour western Canada four times just to raise the money necessary to put out this album, which was actually recorded last August," the dishevelled songwriter says with a note of pride. "Because we do everything

ourselves, it takes a lot of time and energy to put out a record we can all be proud of. No sooner than do we get off the road, then there's more bills to pay, like studio payments, equipment purchases, and booking agent's fees. We don't lose money on the road, but we sure do spend it. On this last tour, we probably grossed \$20,000 and spent \$15,000 of that by the time we got back home. But that's the cost of running this show. We're not complaining. It's what we do, right?"

What We Do was recorded at Profile Studios with producer Cecil English (NoMeansNo, DOA) and released on the band's own Groundup label. In keeping with the **Roots Roundup** tradition of employing local artists and photographers whenever possible, the album sports a magnificent cover by painter Thomas Anfield. The 14 tracks on the album include a dozen original songs, an indescribably insane

cover of Chuck Berry's "Maybelline", and a hallucinogenic barnyard romp called "The Chicken Strut" that really manages to capture the raw energy of **Roots Roundup's** live shows.

"We are all really happy with it because it's an honest representation of the band but, at the same time, we'd like to get back into the studio right away," says Hathaway with furrowed brow. "We'd like to do some recording this summer and maybe release a live album early next spring."

Perhaps some of that future project's tracks will be recorded overseas. After all those endless months spent driving from coast to coast, Hathaway figures it is now high time for his outfit to head to Europe. But local **Roots** fans need not worry: that trip will require the outlay of considerable cash, so the band will surely continue to play shows throughout the province this summer. ■

Ladies, Spirit Charm Glastonbury Crowds

BY MICHELLE SMITH

GLASTONBURY, England—High on a hill, in a meadow overlooking the greenery of the Somerset countryside, a dragon is in labour. Built of aluminum sheets, she stretches 15 metres from tail to snout. Steam pours forth from steel air holes in her back as the "baby"—a mud kiln with a clay model of a baby dragon inside—is fired and steamed. Surrounded by a ring of fire, she looks down on a sea of coloured tents stretching for two miles as the sound of drums, guitars, and cheering crowds permeates the hazy midsummer dusk.

The site is known as the Field of Avalon, and once housed a Neolithic stone circle. Today it is host to the Glastonbury Festival of Contemporary Performing Arts, the highlight of Britain's extensive music festival season. What started out in 1970 as 2,000 hippies and their kids listening to Marc Bolan has exploded into upwards of 80,000 ravers, travellers, punks, and everyday folk enjoying three days and nights—Friday to Sunday (June 26 to 28)—of everything from rock bands to circus performers, poets, and alterna-

tive technology exhibits.

"The look of the people here is amazing," said Spirit of the West's John Mann. The Vancouver band played a 60-minute set on Sunday afternoon to an enthusiastic crowd—some already familiar with the group through its 1990 tour with Britain's Wonder Stuff. "It's this whole subculture... Everyone is so laid back and accepting."

"Laid back" could be Glastonbury's catch-phrase. But the festival does have a purpose beyond bringing together thousands of people to dance all night or chant with the Hare Krishnas. Organizers hoped to raise £150,000 (\$300,000) for Greenpeace, mostly from a percentage of ticket sales. At £49 a shot, the sold-out festival shouldn't have a problem.

Still, this year's Glastonbury event was a bit of a risk for Michael Eavis, the farmer who has staged the gathering for 20 years. It was cancelled last year because local residents complained of the noise, the litter, and the thousands of "travellers" who have, in the past, made Eavis's fields their post-festival campground.

This year, though, the low-key presence of the police helped affairs run smoothly. Smiling men and

women in bobbies' hats mixed amiably with festival-goers, seemingly oblivious to the cries of "Hash fudge! Get your hash fudge here!"

One aspect of festival policing was left to headliner Billy Bragg, who encouraged revellers to pick up their empty beer cans and be wary of anyone standing on a soapbox. He also had harsh words for one of Canada's biggest cultural exports.

"People have asked me if I wanted to leave the country after the Tories got re-elected," said the "big-nosed bard of Barking". "I'd rather have left when Bryan Adams was number one on the charts for 16 weeks."

While Adams wasn't on the bill for Glastonbury, Ontario's **Barenaked Ladies** were.

"I just got here today, but it's wild!" exclaimed the Ladies' Steven Page. "I never imagined anything this big!"

Wild is a good word to describe the reaction the **Barenaked Ladies** got from a tired, hot, and unsuspecting Glastonbury crowd. Fans leapt, screaming, to their feet for "If I Had A Million Dollars", and yelled even louder for an encore.

"I didn't know anything about this band," said one British listener, New-

castle's Rob Borthwick, "but they were bloody fantastic. At the end of the show, everyone had huge smiles on their faces."

"It's really nice to play for an audience who have come to listen to music just for the hell of it," confirmed Page.

Perhaps the **Barenaked Ladies** succeeded because their eclectic sound reflects the Glastonbury ethos. The festival's bookings—everything from Tom Jones to Lou Reed—are presented on four main stages and dozens of smaller venues; culinary diversions range from tofu delight to greasy chips and beans; and, of course, there's the dragon kiln.

The weariness of three days of sense bombardment brought hundreds to "chill out" at the Dragon Mother's birthing site, and the dragon baby was hatched. The four-foot sculpture was brought from the kiln with an air of ritual—appropriate enough, as this artistic undertaking was intended to symbolize the fire of the universe and the rebirth of the earth.

"The epitome of Glastonbury?" said Mark, one of the dragon's three creators. "Yeah, everyone is totally bonkers!" ■

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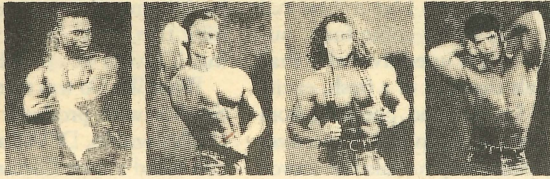
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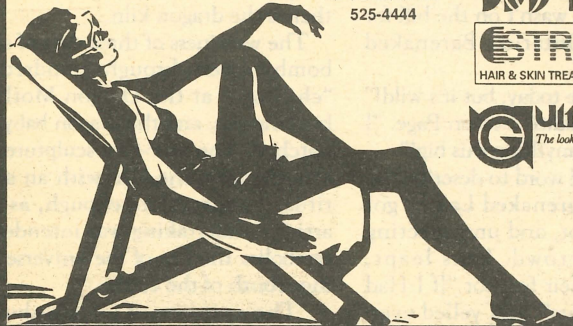
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