

The Coatpuller

John Sinclair

1966

The Gran-de Ballroom gets better and better every week, and it's my own opinion that anyone who doesn't go out there at least one night a week is just crazy. Frank Fox says so too. Likewise the MC5 keeps taking off for further spaces—this is the best thing that could have happened to them. Any band that is based on human principles rather than strictly musical ones, i.e. any group of musicians who are concerned with exploiting their own possibilities for expression as human beings with instruments and not just as guys playing “tunes,” have to have the opportunity to work together over an extended period of time, and in front of a sympathetic audience too.

A hip audience will always inspire the musicians in front of them to dig deeper and do everything they CAN do, and the vibrations coming at the musicians from the audience merge with their own vibrations to form a huge human pulsation that surpasses what most people know as “music” to take over the whole hall and turn everyone there, finally, into pure human freaks. Which is what we all are anyway, once we step out of our ego-boxes, and into the light.

I go back to a poem of LeRoi Jones' that I re-found today:

“The possibilities of music. First
that it does exist. And that we do,
in that scripture of rhythms. The earth,
I mean the soil, as melody. The fit you need,
the throes. To pick it up and cut
away what does not singularly express.”

Yeah. “That it does exist,” and that all of us can make use of it, now, right here where we are. Thursday, November 17, at the Community Arts Auditorium on the Wayne campus, at 8:30 p.m., another manifestation of the modern world/spirit—the pianist/composer BURTON GREENE will be in Detroit from New York to bring his music to you. Burton will perform on piano in a quartet context (with Charles Moore, John Dana, and Ronald Johnson), in a trio (less Moore), and in solo (on both piano and, hopefully, the huge pipe organ in the Community Arts Auditorium).

Burton's first record, THE BURTON GREENE QUARTET, has just been released on ESP-DISK, and he will record soon for the new Pixie label in New York, and for RCA Victor with a poet. He recently did a solo concert, “Visions and Psalms,” at Town Hall. The concert here will be “free,” but the WSU Artists' Society will ask you for enough money to pay for Burton's plane ticket and meals. And you will be happy to give it up.

The Detroit Contemporary 5 concert the 3rd of November was as predicted, very nice. George Bohanon and altoist Joseph Jarman were added to the DC4 for the concert, and the latter addition provided the major turning point in the night's music. When JoJar entered on the first half on the concert, he immediately shot everybody there, the other musicians and the listeners alike, into a state of frenzied meat excitement, and with Charles poking and whipping him musically the pitch rose & rose.

People were screaming and hollering and laughing for joy—it was beautiful!! and went on for maybe ten minutes, the music leaping & jumping all over the room, all into peoples' bodies. Then the frenzy died down and the first half of the concert over, with people walking around trying to catch their breath.

The second half never made it back up there, but that ten minutes or so was almost enough for one night—like about 500 micrograms I thought at the time.

Coming events: Monday, November 21, a reading by poets Anselm Hollo, here in the US from London on a reading & visiting tour, and George Bowering, recently of Vancouver and now near us in London, Ontario. That same weekend, on Friday night the 18th, the brilliant young American poet GARY SNYDER will be reading on the WSU campus, sponsored by the Miles Modern Poetry Committee, living up to its name for once in a long while. Watch for signs of Gary's reading and don't miss it. You can get his latest American publication MOUNTAINS & RIVERS WITHOUT END at the 5th Estate bookstore.

December 1 (Thursday again): The Roscoe Mitchell Unit from Chicago, one of the most exciting bands in the country. Roscoe's record SOUND will be released on Delmark soon, but you can hear him LIVE at the Lower DeRoy Auditorium December 1. And on December 8, the amazing LYMAN WOODARD ENSEMBLE at Community Arts. More of that next time.

There are still a lot of books, magazines & records at the 5th Estate bookstore that people aren't picking up on—there don't seem to be too many literate people around the city, which is a big drag. You can come in and look, and if you're really interested you should come on a weeknight—Friday & Saturday nights the store is jammed with button-buyers. But there is really a lot of very groovy stuff here that you should be seeing & hearing.

Last word: The Down-Home Tyrannosaurus of Despair is being held back by musicians who won't make rehearsals. We need a bassist, lead guitar and numerous other people. Any good players who are really INTERESTED in making rehearsals please get in touch with me at the 5th Estate.

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