

# Bach on Rock

Franklin Bach

1966

It was a Thursday night, December 8, at Wayne State's Community Arts Auditorium. I was about to hear Lyman Woodward play for the first time...Mustachioed John Sinclair came out of the wings and quietly told us Lyman was going to play and with who and all that. Then Woodward and Charles Miles padded out mumbling to each other. Lyman sat at the piano and Miles stood with his saxophone and they began to play some of the cleanest music I've ever heard. Woodward and friends play a kind of free jazz and their concert was hard to describe in ordinary terms at all. The improvisations on the first number lulled one into tranquility and then slid into raucous excitement and then back down again and up and down and when it was all over the audience was too astonished to applaud. Miles stayed, Woodward switched to electric organ, and was later joined by Charles Moore on cornet and Melvin Davis on drums.

The four of them created some of the most beautiful SOUNDS heard on the new music scene. Woodward got inside the pure SOUND of his organ—it expanded, exploded, rumbled, shook, pulsated, trembled, and shrank. Then the music got funky, jumped, and snorted, and when pompadored soul singler Andrew Jeffries joined the session it got down to the real nitty gritty. After some James Brown and Sam and Dave and B.B. King renditions the concert was over. Judging from audience reaction during and after the show it was one of the best performances the Artist's Workshop has presented.

A few people in attendance were a little disappointed to see Woodward do soul. But that's how Lyman got where he is now—by being unafraid to do any kind of thing he wants to. That's how any music—rock music—grows; people are unafraid to do Rhythm and Blues, folk, Indian, Classical, feedback. The fact that a lot of young, unafraid rock musicians (including me, I guess) were listening hard to Woodward that night seems to say that the sound of new jazz will soon be in the sound of rock, too...

A few comments I've heard about the Jefferson Airplane: 1) They have a freak, atonal sound. 2) They are an unoriginal west-coast production. 3) Their new first album was poorly recorded. Some of these things are true, some are false, all that matters is: the Airplane is wonderful. I finally heard the album "THE JEFFERSON AIRPLANE TAKES OFF" (RCA Victor) last-week and in it the group displays a truly unique combination of brilliant vocal arrangements and solid rock band backing. I have been told they sound much better live and can't wait to see them in concert. Get that L.P. "THE J.A. TAKES OFF."

An almost brand new band, THE COSMIC EXPANDING, showed up at the Grande Ballroom last Saturday night and blew minds with what could be described as pretty heavy freaking in sort of a MOTHERS OF INVENTION bag. Watch out, they could move very fast.

The famous SPIKE DRIVERS return to the city after a long absence when they play at the Living End December 26 to January 8. I'll have to see this...

Sorry I was missing last issue, folks. Rock n' roll is a womb...

# fifth Estate

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