

Mixed Mead-Ear

Tony Reay

1968

Well, here we are at the advent of yet another season of goodwill and love to all men, etc. I wish you a very happy something. Did you ever think how many people, at Christmas, celebrate the birth of someone they don't believe in?

Congratulations, firstly, must go to Audio Arts of Detroit for the fine way in which they turned Hendrix's thing into a superfluous shamble of chaotic hostility. Special thanks to Phil Ober of Audio Arts who, having denied me an interview with Hendrix (an interview arranged with Hendrix's manager over a month before the concert) on the grounds that there wasn't time—which there wasn't—and told myself and a photographer with me “But you can stand right at the front to get some good shots!”

We thanked him and went to the front, where two rent-a-pigs told us we had to leave. We called over Mr. Ober to clear us, whereupon he asked what the hell we were doing at the front and why we weren't in our seats. (This is a part of the red tape of musical bureaucracy known as “lying.”)

Our seats, which were special press review seats given to us free by WKNR, were difficult to sit in without banging one's head on the Cobo ceiling—a slight exaggeration but suffice it to say that we could barely see the stage let alone photograph anything on it.

The actions taken by all concerned in charge were a hairsbreadth short of malicious. (Charlie—the photographer—tried to get a little closer to the stage and was roughed up by two more rent-a-pigs and sent back to his seat.) To finish off a delightful evening, Hendrix's show proved why they didn't want very much publicity. I hate watching a tired band!

By way of changing the subject, I remember once hearing the President (note the capital ‘p’) say “This is our world and if necessary we will kill to keep it,” and I thought at the time “Wow, but it's not our world man, part of it's mine and you ain't welcome to any part of it if that's what you're going to do with it.”

I saw the MC5 at the Ballroom on Thanksgiving Wednesday. Brother J.C.

Crawford came forward and gave out a rap which said, “This is our world and we will kill to keep it,” and “There are no in-betweens; you must be for or against.” I must say that it took me a while to realise what he'd said but, oh dear, although I am certainly no fan of the present day system of politics, I must go along with the Beatles and say “show me the plan, man.” I want to see every aspect of modern governmental structure replaced with one at least as good before I can condone open revolution. So that makes me in-between.

(Editors' note: You certainly are, Tony baby!)

So if that's what you're going to do with the world, man (i.e. just change it into chaos) to then again I say “It's not our world, part of it's mine and if you want to do whatever you like with my part of it, then you'll get your ass kicked—same as anyone else—pro pro- or anti system, good or bad, black or white, who tries the same thing.” However, as this is a music column, may I add that although Terry Reid is magnificently incredible and hard working on stage, his album is not the best I've heard, to put it mildly. Entirely the opposite applies to Blood, Sweat and Tears, whose album is one of the best I've heard, but whose stage presence and act is disgustingly untight. Merry Christmas and long may your eyeballs have dilated pupils.

fifth Estate

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Fifth Estate #68, December 12-25, 1968

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