

5/Oct/2005 The Scene (Luton News/Dunstable Gazette)

The Brian Heywood Column

All that Jazz

Luton's Hat Factory has a treat for Jazz fans this weekend when Perry Louis's Focus on Jazz project puts on a weekend of jazz based activities featuring DJs, professional live bands and Street-Fusion Jazz dance. The weekend kicks off on Friday with an evening of current Jazz sounds along with Soul and Funk from some of the top local DJs both past and present. On Saturday there's a very cool soul-jazz and boogaloo four piece outfit from Leeds called the **New Master Sounds** who've been making quite a splash for themselves on the international jazz scene while spearheading the UK Jazz/funk revival – see www.newmastersounds.com for more information.

On Sunday, augmenting the regular afternoon Jazz Jam, you'll get a chance to hear the **Clark Tracey Trio** who'll be playing in the evening. Drummer Clark Tracey has jazz in his blood being the son of the legendary pianist, composer and arranger Stan Tracey, though he doesn't rest on his dad's laurels, being described as "one of the sharpest jazz drummers in the country" by the Birmingham Evening Post. Since going professional at the age of 17 he has worked in ensembles with many rising Jazz stars like Django Bates, Iain Ballamy, Alec Dankworth and Tina May who records on Luton's 33 Records who are based at the Hat Factory.



The evening concerts will take place in the basement venue and on both the evenings there will be appearances from dancers who taken part in Perry Louis's Focus on Jazz Dance courses with juniors appearing on Sunday night with Clark Tracey and the adults doing a spot on the Saturday night. Ticket prices for both events are £6 and you can get from the box office on 01582-878100 or on the door. By the way, you can keep up-to-date electronically by joining the Hat Factory's jazz electronic mailing list - send an email to hatfactory@luton.gov or call the box office from more information.

I see that next Saturday (Oct 15) the Modest Music Group are presenting the organised madness of **Sleeping Dogz** at the Hat Factory. The band features the completely mental **Wild Willy Barret** with cellist **Mary Holland** and multi-instrumentalist **John Devine**. They've played at The London Palladium, folk festivals such as The Cambridge Folk Festival and put on a great show with their unique blend of English, Cajun, Celtic and Moorish music. Wild Willie is one of those performers who can go out the other side of good to give a great performance with some fantastic songs, amazing tunes, bizarre humour and you get a real opportunity to witness something special. See www.themodestmusicgroup.com for more information. Incidentally, you can also see Wild Willie and friends in a more informal setting at their 'open mic' night at the Norman King in Dunstable on Wednesday nights.

12/Oct/2005 The Scene (Luton News/Dunstable Gazette)

The Brian Heywood Column

The Return of the Native...

Imicus front man Andy Miller tells me that following a hugely successful headline gig in London's West End, the band returns to Luton. It seems that many of the band's fans were turned away from a recent sell-out show at the Luton University Student Union due an unprecedented demand for tickets. To atone for their run-away



success they are now headlining at a special show at the Park in Luton on Sunday (Oct 16) to make up it up to all those people who were turned away from the Student Union gig. To make it a really special event, entry to the show will be free and what's more, the band will also be giving out free CDs. You can't say fairer than that.

In case you've not heard them yet, the up-and-coming Luton and Stevenage based band's sound is a sparky, spiky mix of atmospheric rock with plenty of guitar driven dark power when needed. Anyway, Andy goes on to tell me that in addition to the upcoming live shows the band will shortly be recording a video for the "Shadows" the track that featured on the recent "Vandalism Begins at Home" compilation album. The music video will be directed by the BBC's Mark Goodhue and they are now looking for actors interested in involvement in the project. The plan is to use the video to promote **Imicus** on the Scuz and Kerrang cable TV channels. Anyone interested in acting in the video can contact the band at info@imicusband.com or email www.Imicusband.com

Don't forget that Wild Willy Barrat's **Sleeping Dogz** are playing at the Hat Factory on Saturday (Oct 15). The band features cellist **Mary Holland** and multi-instrumentalist **John Devine** along with the completely mental **Wild Willy** himself playing a unique blend of English, Cajun, Celtic and Moorish music. The following Friday (Oct 21) **WoodworX** will be playing at the same venue. The band features the amazing voice of Australian singer Toni Wood who along with myself on guitar, Donna Whitlock on percussion and Bru Brown on fiddle will be performing a mix of Australian and British, traditional and contemporary songs with an electric edge. See www.themodestmusicgroup.com for more information.

Rocksteady Records emailed to say that they'd like to extend a big thank you to everyone who went to last weekend's tribute concert for the late **Audio Justice** drummer Lee Haynes. The concert was a huge success and they managed to raise over £1,500.00 for the Lister Hospital Renal Unit. Lee, an incredibly accomplished drummer, died at the end of May aged 25. This event, and the money raised, was a fitting tribute for a well known and enthusiastic member of his local music community. See www.audiojustice.com for more information.

19/Oct/2005 The Scene (Luton News/Dunstable Gazette)

The Brian Heywood Column

Bad Pennies turn up again

Anyone who missed the stunning performance that **Jez Lowe and the Bad Pennies** gave at the Dunstable Folk and Dance Weekend main concert get a second chance to see this great band on Sunday (Oct 23) at the Sun Hotel in Hitchin. Jez and the band perform original material which is a mix of gritty northern social comment and bizarre humour. In fact they're just back from touring North America where they were promoting their latest CD "Dolally", which is Jez's fourteenth album to date. Support for the night will be a young fiddler Ceri Davies who was one of the winners at this year's St.Albans New Roots competition. The Sun Hotel is in Sun Street, Hitchin; for more information you can visit www.hitchinfolkclub.co.uk or phone Maureen on 01462 812391.

On Friday (Oct 21) **WoodworX** will be playing at the Hat Factory in Luton with support from singer/songwriter **J. Starck**. WoodworX features the amazing voice of Australian singer Toni Wood who you may have seen performing with enQ at the Sunday concert at the Dunstable Folk & Dance festival. Along with myself on guitar, Donna Whitlock on percussion and 'Bru' Brown on fiddle we will be performing a mix of Australian and British, traditional and contemporary songs with an electric edge. **J.Starck** comes from just down the road in St Albans and is gaining a solid reputation playing a mix of folk, country along with a little bit of Soul. For more information about the main act see www.woodworx.org or www.themodestmusicgroup.com for more about the venue.

Luton based acoustic rockers The Tempest will be playing at Bedford Esquires on Saturday (Oct 22) along with three other bands. Tickets can be bought in advance for £5 or will cost £6 on the door. To purchase tickets contact James on 07838 22 32 66 or email James@The-Tempest.com

Phonic Rapture, Red Star Rebels and Pirate Radio are playing some serious rock and punk over at The Exchange in King St, Luton on Sunday (Oct 23). Doors open at 8pm and admission is £4 or £3 with a flier available from www.pdmmusic.com, the bands or The Exchange.

If you fancy some seriously riff driven original guitar rock then check out **Echelon Blue** who are down at the Horn in St Albans on Tuesday (Oct 25). The four piece Luton based band has been around since the end of 2001 with a sound influenced by Sound Garden, Alice in Chains and Led Zeppelin. Also playing are Dannuielle and Coprolite and the music kicks off at 8pm and entry costs £4. The Horn, which has to be one of the best music venues in the area, can be found on Victoria Street in St Albans just next to the British Rail mainline station. For more information and a full music programme see www.thehorn.co.uk



26/Oct/2005 The Scene (Luton News/Dunstable Gazette)

The Brian Heywood Column

The World comes to Newcastle...

I'm off to the WOMEX world music exposition this week. Long standing (or should that be 'long suffering'?) readers of this column may remember that I tend to head off about this time of year to catch up on what's happening in the world of 'World Music', see lots of great acts showcasing - and incidentally try and get some gigs. The big difference this year is that, instead of heading off to somewhere sunny like Seville, the conference is coming to the UK - specifically the big new Sage music venue in Gateshead, just across the River Tyne from Newcastle. In case you're wondering what 'World Music' is; it's an umbrella term that was cooked up by a bunch of UK based record labels, promoters and musicians in 1987 as a way of getting non-mainstream 'ethnic' influenced music into the record shops.

Anyone who's been to the Luton Carnival or Hitchin's 'Rhythms of the World' festival will have been exposed to our local world music scene. But unfortunately a lot of people in the music biz think that the UK can't have either an indigenous form of world music or can act as a melting pot for fusing musical influences from around the globe. This is daft as Britain has always been a crossroads for different types of music throughout its history. Even something as English as Morris Dancing is a combination of North African, Moorish and pagan Celtic music and dance. So this year's WOMEX is an ideal opportunity for the UK world, roots and folk music scene to show the rest of the world what we can do. See www.womex.com for more information.

Moving closer to home, next Wednesday (Nov 2), acoustic music fans get the opportunity to see **Buffalo** who play great songs infused with the sounds of bluegrass and country with well thought out arrangements and "superb musicianship". The band is appearing at The Orange Tree in Norton Road, Baldock and the music starts 8.30pm with ticket being priced at £5/£6/£7 (accompanied children free - 2 per adult). For more information contact Alan on 0845 123 2656 or email alan@madnanny.co.uk

Andy Miller from **Imicus** emailed me to say that their last show at The Park, Luton, was a huge success with over 200 CDs given away. He also tells me that on October 31st, all of their email list subscribers will receive an email inviting you to download the band's new album free of charge. The get onto the mailing list just go to their website at www.imicusband.com and enter your email address or see a band member at their next local show at The Well, Luton on Nov 12.

Send gig information to "The Brian Heywood Column", PO Box 649, Dunstable, Beds, LU5 4XD and you can also email details of gigs, gossip, web sites or anything else to info@lutonscene.com. A searchable archive of the column is available on the web at <http://www.lutonscene.com>