

arts/entertainment

Heart Murmurs' album captures Zoo Bar's blues

By Casey McCabe

Ever since I can remember obtaining a fool-proof I.D. and enjoying all the benefits of this new form of entertainment, one of my best memories comes from stumbling into a place called the Zoo Bar and getting my

first taste of live blues music.

If the beer, the smoke and the crowd didn't start to affect you, the music undoubtedly would. I sat there mesmerized by a combination of all four, but it was the gritty blues music put out by Eddie Clearwater that was driving itself home to every tapping foot in the place.

I deduced that there was an irresistible quality about live blues that almost no one could resist, and its rightful place was in a crowded, no-frills place like the Zoo Bar. It's like a home away from home for most of its patrons. I also promised myself most everytime I left the bar, that I would go down to the local record store the next day with a blank check and invest a major part of my savings into blues albums.

Somehow under the fluorescent lights and strange background music of the record store the mood just wasn't the same. I'd blame it on the beer from the night before, leave the store empty-handed, and thus my collection of blues albums grew slowly.



Photo courtesy of Candy Apple Records

Little Jimmy Valentine's new *Live at the Zoo Bar* album captures music from the Zoo Bar on vinyl to create a home away from home for its patrons.

album review

So there is something special about the release of *Little Jimmy Valentine and The Heart Murmurs Live at the Zoo Bar* on the local Candy Apple record label. The Heart Murmurs, one of Lincoln's most tangible assets, are now captured on vinyl in a fine live recording that doesn't distract from the music, but instead puts you back in the Zoo Bar in a cloud of smoke and a crowd of companions.

If you've ever heard the Heart Murmurs before, or know their style, there is no need for a detailed analysis of the music on *Live at the Zoo Bar*. The eight tracks on the album were pulled from three nights of recording at the Zoo last January. They pulled no punches—it is the same gut-bucket blues the band has become known for.

Four of the Heart Murmurs take turns on lead vocals. The best results come from Jim Cidlik on "Dust My Broom" and "Shake Rattle & Roll," and harp player Madison Slim on "What Have I Done."

But each member of the band shows the strong musical capabilities that make the band a complete blues ensemble. Bass player Larry Boehmer, guitarist Doug Rosekrans, and drummer Marc Wilson firmly anchor the sound, allowing for individual efforts to soar from lead guitarist Sean Benjamin, harmonica player Madison Slim, and some especially fine piano work from Cidlik.

A tip of the hat goes to Candy Apple Records for the high quality live recording, and a nicely designed, well-packaged album. It is reported to be selling well locally and how much farther it will go should be interesting to watch.

It may be a little too easy to heap on the praise when local folks do good, but Little Jimmy Valentine and the Heart Murmurs deserve it. They filled a void that existed in Lincoln for too many years.

I'm of age now. I still go to the Zoo. And I never get tired of listening to the Heart Murmurs.

Milwaukee Repertory Theater sets 'Shrew' in Italy

By Penelope Smith

In its 26th season the Milwaukee Repertory Theater is again touring the Midwest with what is hoped will be another of its highly acclaimed productions. For the 1979-80 season the theater's artistic director, John Dillon, is directing the company in a production of Shakespeare's *Taming of the Shrew*.

The approach taken by Dillon is an unusual one and is likely to cause controversy among Shakespeare devotees and purists.

"We set *Shrew* in an unconventional way, WWII Italy. Petruchio is an American G.I. and Kate is a sort of Sophia Loren. Petruchio is from a different culture with rougher, bolder habits. This allows us to explore Kate and to see that Kate is really different," Dillon said.

"Shakespeare was interested in the many different types of love," Dillon said. "In this play there are basically two love stories. One is the conventional romantic one. Bianca and her lover court and sneak around. It's a stereotype, like Ali McGraw and Ryan O'Neal in *Love Story*. Then there's another type of love. It's tempestuous and passionate, maybe more passionate than the other."

Dillon said that this was Kate's type of love and it illustrates her personality.

"Part of Kate's problem," he said, "is that nobody understands her. She has tremendous exuberance, vitality and passion. Her love affair is as passionate and exciting as she is."

DILLON DECLINED to comment anymore on the personality of his Kate and in particular whether he handles her final speech of submission as an ironic or sincere one.

"If I told you how we handle the last speech," he said, "It would spoil the fun, it's the most interesting part of the entire play."

Dillon said he really enjoyed dealing with WWII. "It's a clearly identified historical picture with a lot of pictures. It's been great fun to research the period and the details of life."

He said he didn't mind at all about taking the play out

of its Elizabethan context, what would be called by "purists" an anachronism.

"Shakespeare loved anachronisms. His Italian geography was bad and his Latin and English were jumbled. I don't feel bad about it. It's an attempt to capture his exuberance of style. His Roman plays were in Elizabethan dress; anachronism is a part of Elizabethan England."

AS DIRECTOR, Dillon has had to develop one interpretation of the play: For example in this particular production he does not use the induction, a framing device that makes of "The Taming of the Shrew" a play within a play.

"I cut the introduction this time, but maybe sometime I'll use it when I want to do something different with the

play. Shakespeare is inexhaustible. I get angry when purists say there's only one way of doing a play. There are different layers of meaning, and a hundred different ways of doing *Shrew*," Dillon said.

"Any good play has multiple meanings," he said. "The emphasis comes from the interpretive artist—as opposed to the scholar-critic who makes the reader aware of many things. On stage the words go by only once so we must decide what they mean. As an artist you have to leave yourself open to what a playwright has to say to you. You cannot be controlled by the critic because then there is no discovery and without discovery there can be no creation."

"The Taming of the Shrew" will be performed Nov. 1 and 2 at 8 p.m. in Kimball Recital Hall and next Wednesday at the Orpheum Theater in Omaha.

Guitar book good for all string buffs

By Casey McCabe

If you enjoy playing the guitar, if you enjoy listening to the guitar, if you have a reasonable idea what a guitar looks like, there now is a book that should broaden your knowledge of the instrument.

The Guitar Player Book from Grove Press is more than a collection of quotes, facts and pictures. It is a tribute to the instrument itself and the people who play it, put together by the editors of *Guitar Player Magazine* with style, clarity and perhaps a bit of reverence.

As the publisher of *Guitar Player Magazine*, Jim Crockett, in his preface to the book, points out:

"(We) have always tried to differentiate between those who just play a little guitar and those who are serious musicians—one group thinks of the instrument as a prop or, at best, a necessity for singing or songwriting; the

other considers the guitar as an instrument to be practiced, to be developed, to be honored."

book review

Along these lines, the editors have devoted more than half of the 400 page book to insights from 78 of the arts' finest performers.

THE LIST IS wide and varied, and reads like a Who's Who in the music world. Jeff Beck, Julian Bream, Eric Clapton, Jimi Hendrix, B.B. King, Leo Kottke, John McLaughlin, Carlos Montoya, Jimmy Page, Joe Pass, and Frank Zappa are but a few of the interviews brought from the pages of *Guitar Player Magazine* for the book.

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