

JAZZ CLUB

I went to a jazz club last night with my friend Kathy-Rose and a couple of her friends. We were going to see a band called Mingus Big Band, so I thought, "Okay Big Band I know what that sounds like, dancing around 20's style." But it was actually a big band rather than Big Band. This was going to be dangerous jazz not safe jazz.

When we walked into the club, apparently one of the most famous jazz clubs in London, we were seated right at the front. Kathy-Rose could literally have reached out and touched the pianist, I'll leave you to make up your own punch line for that one. The place was exactly like the nightclub in Goodfellas where they're led in and a table is whipped in place specially for them.

The support act were called The It's Only Noise Trio or something like that. These guys were good. I only detected the hint of a tune twice and that's only because they got distracted by Kathy Rose touching them. On the piano there was Gareth "No Melody" Williams, on drum (singular, as the guy said it himself) Tony "No Rhythm" Mayo and on string Orlando "It took me years to get this bad" Fleming. During their first tune / piece / expedition I was barely containing fits of laughter, I was actually in a jazz club in London listening to jazz, real jazz, jazz for Christ's sake, jazz! During the second I was just starting to contain my joy when I noticed that the double bass player was actually reading from sheet music. "I think you've got it upside down mate." He'd actually gone and bought a piece of paper with random notes written on it. I have to admit I was a little disappointed by the pianist, he was big lad (looking like he'd come from the farm especially for tonight, and what with feeding the sows and all he hadn't had time to practise, or learn a tune or even have a single lesson) and I was hoping he was going to get a really good sweat going in the white shirt he was wearing. He sweated it up a bit making a nice kind of heart shape but I was really looking for quantity not quality.

But the It's Only Noise Trio acted like a kind of sorbet. By the time they were done I had forgotten what a tune sounded like. I had joined them in their musicians' hell, like some Greek myth of these three musicians sentenced by a vengeful goddess to forever play music with no tune. Now I was ready for Mingus Big Band. And I actually enjoyed Mingus Big Band. There was 15 of them one on drum, one on piano, one on string and the rest on bras (singular of brass of course). And that's pretty impressive 12 brass instruments blasting you out of it as you sit within a trombone length away from them. There was still plenty of nonsense going on but when there's so many of them playing you have to come back to a bit of a tune eventually. There was one crazy old guy with a grey beard and a rasta hat on the trombone. The band leader made some crap joke about there's no shortage of bald eagles in the band and the audience gave a slight laugh and then a second later there was a big cackle from rasta hat and we knew he was going to be our favourite. He sang the Spiderman theme tune along to one of

their songs. Then in the next tune made the sound of a car changing gears with his trombone and when he eventually got to where he was going the band kicked in again and we were having a great time.

The It's Only Noise Trio came out again this time accompanied by a saxophonist. They all played away for a while, no one was really listening that much, and then the saxophonist just played a couple of notes and walked off stage. Now that's fucking jazz. Just randomly walking off stage, that's fucking jazz. During this set The It's Only Noise Trio seemed to all take it in turns to fall asleep, while still playing unconsciously. Well when I say playing I mean randomly hitting their instruments. And I'll leave you to make up your own punch line for that one as well.

Then back to Mingus to finish things off. Their drummer they claimed was 19 but that guy was definitely only 14 at the most and he looked like the guy from Rushmore. He seemed determined not to look at his drums once throughout the entire set. Instead looking off to the side, closing his eyes or reading a paper. And I'm pretty sure he did actually have an epileptic fit but no one else seemed to notice.

They say it's the notes that they don't play and over the course of the evening I don't think anyone played the E flat 2 octaves above middle C, which really makes you think doesn't it? "The E flat 2 octaves above middle C...The E flat 2 octaves above middle C...The E flat 2 octaves above middle C...I dig."

Results:

I definitely did enjoy it but I don't want to repeat it for at least thirty years.

Conclusions:

Jazz isn't music it's just some kind of clever finger exercise.