

BOB BERTLES MOONTRANE: HOME-MADE JAZZ HITS A BRIGHT NOTE

by Eric Myers

Bob Bertles's Moontrane
Musicians' Club

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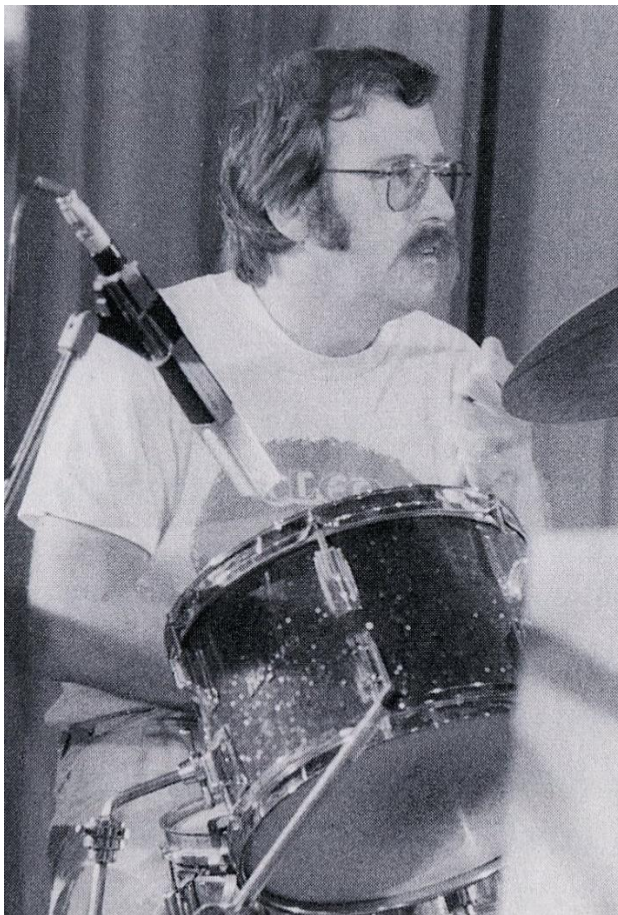
Bob Bertles's Moontrane, which appeared for the Jazz Action Society on Wednesday, is one Australian group which reflects, with a cultured ease and authority, significant recent developments in jazz as an art form. It consists of Bertles on saxophone, Mike Bukovsky on trumpet, Dave Panichi trombone, Paul McNamara piano, Darcy Wright bass and Alan Turnbull drums.



Bob Bertles on tenor saxophone: his group reflects significant recent developments in jazz as an art form...PHOTO COURTESY AUSTRALIAN JAZZ MUSEUM

These fine musicians' ability to improvise goes without saying, and it would be superfluous to comment on the quality of individual solos. Indeed, the outstanding aspect of the concert was the group's extraordinary cohesion, built to a great extent on warm rapport in the rhythm section, and the sharp, brilliant exchange of musical ideas which characterised their playing for some two hours.

I would draw attention to Turnbull's uncanny ability to anticipate the direction and peaks of the soloists, providing colours and punctuations which were totally supportive and well integrated into the overall sound. This concert saw the emergence of Paul McNamara as a composer of originality and considerable ability, with the performance of three of his works — *Valley of the Tweed*, *Psychic Surgeon of Baguio*, and *James Cook RN*.



Alan Turnbull: an uncanny ability to anticipate the direction and peaks of the soloists...

McNamara is an outstanding pianist and a jazz scholar who has recently published a small book entitled *A Twelve Tone Concept For Contemporary Jazz*. Having heard his compositions for the first time, I would venture to place

him among a small group of new composers — Bruce Cale, Roger Frampton and Mick Kenny are others who come to mind — who are in the process of producing an original Australian modern jazz repertoire.

The concert also included Mike Bukovsky's composition *Are You Blueish?* and it was certainly the Australian-composed material which was most rewarding.



Trumpeter Mike Bukovsky: Moontrane's repertoire included his composition Are You Blueish?...

Although there is not a large audience for this type of music, it is important for Australian jazz that bands such as Moontrane go on, and continue to present their music to the public.