

BLUE NOTES BRING A S.A. IDIOM TO JAZZ

AT THE WEIZMANN HALL: Chris McGregor and the Blue Notes.

CHRIS MCGREGOR, jazz composer, arranger and pianist, on his return to Cape Town established himself and his group among the best jazz giants at a stimulating and innovating jazz concert last night. The Blue Notes became eligible for membership of the exciting, tortuously bleating anarchical in-groups of *avant garde* jazz, while remaining fastidiously free from contrived gyrations.

Incorporating the discipline and sophistication of main stream and West Coast jazz, they managed to blend a colloquial South African interpretation to familiar numbers such as 'I Covered the Waterfront' and Miles's 'Seven Steps to Heaven.'

From the first solos of Chris and Dudd Pukwana on alto sax, the quintet presented a dynamic new sound and they explored, intellectually and emotionally, every facet of each number that reverberated through the hall, and enthused the audience.

Throughout, Chris on piano interwove his relaxed yet profound rulings and discords to maintain the other solo variations within a compact organized exploration. He made fantastic alluring demands on each of his musicians which, amazingly, were met with a constant newness.

But it was after the recess that the quintet magnified into an electrifying group and gave forth on Chris's own composition 'Vortex Special.' In this they

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THE BEST IN TOWN

The Tree That Sat Down. Whimsy done without slush, and even Barrie could hardly ever contrive that. Delightful musical with dexterous scenic effects. (Little Theatre.)

The Balcony. Satire and social commentary, seen through Genet's blithely ironic eye. (Broadway)

The Mouse On The Moon. Comedy fantasy. All great fun. (Van Riebeeck.)

established South African jazz as an extension, while apart, from the compartmented jazz idioms existing in the United States today.

'Vortex Special,' brilliant in its suppleness, gave an interpretational concept to our local way of life, with masterful exacting solos by Chris, Nick Moyake on tenor sax and Mongezi Feza on trumpet.

Then came the final number, 'Dorkay House,' composed by Dudd. For nearly 20 minutes the players revealed the turbulence and harshness of Johannesburg while conveying the side-street moods of laughter and tears, and the crying need for people to express themselves. Louis Moholo on drums and Johnny Dyani on bass kept the group swinging to a point of ecstasy.

It was a great pity that the Blue Notes played to an half-empty hall.

Lionel Attwell