

'Genuine' jazz club for Johannesburg

By a Staff Reporter

A JAZZ CLUB will open in Hillbrow on Wednesday night but it will be a jazz club with a difference. At last there will be a place in Johannesburg for serious jazz-lovers to indulge themselves.

No glorified coffee-bar this, with a jazz background. It will be strictly music first and foremost, with merely a few light snacks and coffee to keep the "diggers" from starving. These will be brought round from a near-by coffee-bar.

The club, to be called Downbeat, will be built round the six-piece band of Chris McGregor, the Cape jazz-pianist and

arranger, who led the very successful 16-piece Big Band in Johannesburg recently.

Winners of the National Jazz Festival, they are exponents of the jazz breakthrough in South Africa, called by some reviewers "south stream" as opposed to the American "main stream" and "third stream" movements.

It will be interesting to see how they develop if this club is successful.

Membership will be strict—by introduction or application only. People will not be able to arrive at the door and become members on the spot. They will be given a form and asked to post it unless they are with other members. It is hoped in this way to keep the membership to real enthusiasts.

The membership fee will be R2.10 and the club will be open on Friday, Saturday and Sunday nights only.

It will be on the premises of the old Casanova Club, and next to the old Press Club.

"Countless people have come in and asked me where they can go to listen to some real

jazz," says the club's backer, Mr. V. St. Moritz. "But I have had to wait until the right place came up. This will be ideal. It holds 200 people, so there should be plenty of room."