

# Poetry and jazz struck a real "blues" note

THE SHOW: Beyond the Blues (University Hall).

THE PLAYERS: Zakes Mokae, Mabel Magada, The Blue Notes.

THE PROMOTERS: Union Artists.

"GO MAN, GO," shouted an obviously "with it" audience of jazz enthusiasts once the Blue Notes seven-man combo had warmed up the University Great Hall on Saturday night.

From that moment onwards Union Artists' interesting experiment of combining African jazz and poetry in the aptly titled "Beyond the Blues" was proved successful.

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This was real jazz to set the mind, emotions and senses in high gear and if you were "with it" all the way, you were bound to emerge rather limp, if satisfied.

After the Blue Notes had warmed up there was perfect rapport between musicians and audience and every virtuoso passage was treated with knowledgeable respect and applause.

### UNDER CONTROL

Chris McGregor on piano—he also contributed three excellent compositions to the evening's entertainment—had the combo well under control, but gave Dudu Pukwana (alto sax), Dennis Mpali (trumpet) and Early Mabusa (drums) many opportunities to shine.

Singer Mabel Magada, who has a pleasant voice as honey-poured as herself, was more successful in the slow blues songs such as "Ain't No Use" and the yet "Ntyilo-ntyilo." Her phrasing in the faster tempos was not always effective.

The poetry reading by actor Zakes Mokae, recently returned from playing in "The Blood Knot" in London, came at the end of the programme.

The nine short poems were even bluer than the jazz and in some instances extremely stark.

Lines such as "a bio-chemical accident of epidermis" and "I'm too black and blue to cast a shadow" hit where it hurts.

### TOO MUCH BRASS

Poetry and music were mostly cleverly blended but Mr. Mokae's voice was sometimes drowned by too much brass. The more subtle drum rolls of Early Mabusa provided a better background.

Mr. Mokae should develop greater fluency in reading, however, as one misplaced word so easily destroys the counterpoint of music and words.

E.R.