

Van Leer at Fair

Thijs Van Leer, whose flute playing was the driving force behind the Dutch band Focus, will be the star attraction at Music Expo, a trade fair in Auckland this month, running from July 24 to 29.

The fair, which is organised by the Music Trades Association, is usually an industry affair held in Rotoura. However, this year the venue has been moved to Auckland and every effort is being made to involve the public.

Van Leer is coming from Holland for the fair and will play music in a rock, jazz and classical context. Schtung and Hello Sailor, making their final appearance before their American trip, will feature with Van Leer in a rock concert at the Town Hall.

The instruments and amplification equipment go on display on Thursday July 27, but in the days leading up to the official opening there will be an all-Mozart concert by the Symphonia of Auckland, the rock concert with Schtung, Sailor and Van Leer, and a jazz concert featuring the Bruce Morley Little Big Band and Van Leer.

Van Leer will also perform with the Symphonia on Saturday July 29 in a finale concert. Juan Matteucci will conduct.

JAMES BROWN AT SHORELINE

James Brown probably invented funk and could lay a substantial claim to being the grand daddy of disco.

It's not easy to appreciate the importance of James Brown from New Zealand for Brown is a figure whose influence — musical, political and social — has always been most significant on the American black community.

During the late 50s and early 60s he mounted the James Brown Revue which travelled back and forth across America playing mostly to all-black audiences. It's on this arduous circuit that Brown developed the show that became legendary — with Brown working his audiences into a frenzy that climaxed when he would collapse in an exhausted heap at the centre of the stage at each show. His attendants would rush forward, drape a purple cloak over him and help him slowly off the stage. Suddenly he would fight off his helpers and force his way back to the microphone, only to collapse after forcing out another chorus. Again his



attendants would assist him off the stage, this time draped in a different coloured cloak, to find that he forces them away and ... so on. Brown never left the stage until at least his fifth time through the routine.

In Auckland to perform at two cabaret shows, the routine is now reduced to a mere two capes and a perfunctory run-through, but it was the only aspect of the show that was.

Brown is now at least in his mid 40s but his onstage energy and commitment remains impressive. His movements — the distinctive fast-foot shuffle and press ups — now come in short bursts, rather than the show-long athletics he once managed.

Power is still his trademark. He has one of the loudest, most harsh voices in all of popular music. Onstage his tiny frame seems to contain more power than he dare let loose. After the fast songs, he has to visibly compose himself before he can tackle a moving version of "Georgia on My Mind" — it's as if he didn't contain this strength, he would overwhelm the song.

The fast songs display Brown's taste for simplicity. He's stripped the soul formula to its basics — rhythm and voice.

As one writer has noted: "Attacking Brown for being repetitive is like attacking Africans for being overly fond of drumming. "But it's the slow songs — "Please, Please, Please", "Try Me", "It's a Man's, Man's, Man's World" — that show off Brown's talents as a singer, his ability to wring the most out of a phrase.

For "It's a Man's World" he almost dispensed with the lyrics and for several verses just hammered those words. With Brown's characteristic power and intent, you knew he meant it.

After the show, Bryan Staff of 12M and I talked to James Brown. He's an impossible mixture of the jive-ass and the friendly. He welcomes everybody as brothers, while he sits having his hair permed.

So did Mick Jagger really steal his stage movements from Brown, as legend has it. Brown isn't telling. "I'm not going to talk about Mick. Mick and I are good friends. I don't think as a performer I should say anything."

But he reacts explosively to the suggestion that disco is merely watered-down soul music. "Yeah, you're right man." But admits that disco will "be a broader scope for us." Thus Brown is peddling his 1978 sound under the title of heavy disco. "But this new disco is really heavy soul. But I water some of it down too otherwise people wouldn't understand it."

By now, it's three thirty in the morning and Brown has to leave to catch the five thirty plane to Australia. He's changed his clothes, his hair's finished and he delivers his parting message: "I just want to say to the people out there — 'Hope you live two hundred years and I live two hundred years minus one day, so I never know beautiful people like you have passed away. God bless you.'"

Alastair Dougal

Who's Where

Citizen Band July 9, Founders Theatre, Hamilton. July 21, Auckland University Cafe. July 23, Headquarters Rock Cafe. July 27-29, Island of Real.

Charisma Oscar's Nightclub, Century Arcade, Auckland.

Golden Harvest July 3-8, Bayview Hotel, Napier. July 17-22, Sandown Park, Gisborne. July 24-29 and 31 to August 5, Mayfair Hastings.

Tom Sharplin & the Rockets July 3-8, Aranui Hotel, Christchurch. July 10-16 & 23-30 Shoreline, Dunedin. July 17-22, Waikiwi, Invercargill.

Andy Newbury July 1,7-8, 14-15, 21-22 & 28-29, Durham Arts Centre, Auckland.

Easy Street July 3-8, Cabana Hotel, Napier. July 5-10, Sandown Hotel, Gisborne. July 24-29, Furlong Hotel, Hawera.

Reel to Real July 6-8, Provincial Tavern, Upper Hutt. July 13-15 & 20-22, Olympic Hotel Naenae, Lower Hutt. August 3-5, Provincial Hotel, Upper Hutt.

Bamboo July 5-8, Exchange Tavern, Parnell. 10-15 Hillcrest Tavern, Hamilton. July 27-29, Headquarters Rock Cafe.

Urban Road Wed-Sat, Station Hotel. Sunday & Tuesday, Foundry., Nelson St.

Th'Dudes July 6 & 7, Island of Real. Windsor Tavern 2pm, July 8 & 22. July 13-15, Gluepot. August 1, 12M Radio Workshop.

Mysex July 10-15, Windsor Castle. July 19-22, Gluepot.

Lipservice July 14-15, Headquarters Rock Cafe. July 26-29, Gluepot.

David Hollis & Earthsong, Brent Blann and John Taylor, August 5, Wellington Cultural Centre, World Trade Centre, Sturdee St.

The Plague July 2, Island of Real.

Zig Zag Theatrikills July 9, Island of Real.

Mahana July 14 & 15, Island of Real.

Chris Thompson July 19, Island of Real.

Rough Justice July 20-22, Island of Real.

Murray Partridge July 16, Island of Real.

Trix Kafe July 8, Island of Real.

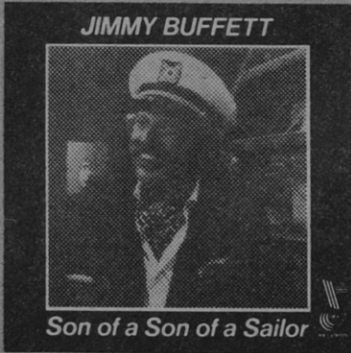
The Flyers July 4-8, Gluepot. July 12-15, Exchange Hotel, Parnell.

Gavin Nannestad July 12 & 13, Electronic music for the Hard people, Island of Real.

JIMMY BUFFETT



SON OF A SON OF A SAILOR



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