

Today's crossword solution



CULTURE

continued from page 1

the International Lounge in the EMU.

The main attraction of the night was the show in the packed EMU Ballroom. The theme of the night was "Kaleidoscope: Seeing cultures in a new light." The show began with a video of students saying what they thought "kaleidoscope" meant. ISA Director Matt Yeow welcomed the audience and said that like a kaleidoscope, cultures are a fusion of patterns and colors that come together to make beautiful combinations.

"We hope you will come away with new perspectives on culture," he said.

Throughout the show, kaleidoscope images were projected on the wall behind the performers. There were 14 numbers in the show, with performances coming from many countries, including Japan, India, Germany, China, Ukraine and Latin American countries. Dance was the most popular medium, but performers also sang, played musical instruments and

performed martial arts.

"I was touched by it because of the importance of the time," said sophomore Elana Mater about a German peace song.

Robert Hafenbrak, a performer and exchange student from Germany, said he enjoyed participating in the show.

"Sometimes it was exhausting, but when you're done the more you enjoy it," he said.

Hafenbrak said he enjoyed meeting all the performers from other countries.

"This year's show was a great success compared to other years," said Dipa Malakar, co-director of International Week and Night. "This year there were a lot of people involved."

She said the hard work and planning since the middle of winter term was worth it. She said the best part was getting positive feedback from the audience about the food, decorations and show.

"If people missed it this year, I'd recommend for them to come next year," she said.

Jonah Schrogin is a freelance reporter for the Emerald.



Lauren Wimer Photographer

Bassist Dave Trenkel and DJ J.D. Monroe groove during Eleven Eyes' performance Saturday night at Luna. The Eugene band combines jazz with funk, rock and more.

Eleven Eyes hints at jazz salvation

The local band draws from a variety of sources and techniques in an uneven but promising concert

By Ryan Nyburg
Senior Pulse Reporter

It's always sad to see a once-great style of music slowly slip into irrelevance. Jazz and blues both were once the most dynamic forms around; now fans wince at every step they take closer to the grave. Every House of Blues that opens, every new soft jazz station, every increasingly worse Wynton Marsalis album drives the stake deeper into the hearts of these formerly powerful genres. Once a musical style requires an institution to stay alive, you can pretty much declare it the beginning of the end.

So give thanks to whatever higher power watches over these sorts of things for giving Eugene the band Eleven Eyes. While blues is finding salvation through labels like Fat Possum Records, jazz might be saved by experimental ensembles such as this. Combining jazz with funk, rock and a wide array of other influences, the band creates an oddly eclectic style that is as thoughtful as it is invigorating. After seeing the group's concert at Luna on Saturday, I think it could safely be said that it is on its way to becoming one of Eugene's best bands.

The group's whole style seems to be based on a synthesis of odd elements, which swirl and groove within the compositions. The best expression of this aesthetic is the inclusion of a disc jockey in the band, who flung out oddball samples and scratched like a maniac over the blare of the horns and guitars. Different genres and musical references popped up at odd intervals, such as the guitarist and bass player moving into a reggae groove during a trombone solo, or the horn section suddenly blurring out a riff from Black Sabbath's "Iron Man." The band members seemed perfectly capable of moving from standard modern jazz to Sun Ra-style space jazz to whatever else took their fancy, all without missing a beat.

Sometimes things didn't coalesce as well as they could have, and the band would end up playing messy unformed compositions. But this was the exception rather than the rule. Most of the time, the band laid out a pretty mellow groove, often pulling it together as tight as any classic jazz unit, going off on wild improvisations and free associating through everything from fusion-era Miles Davis to Jeff Beck. It's great to hear a band so tuned in to its music.

There were some weak points in the group though. One was the

CONCERT REVIEW

overemphasis on the DJ's scratching, which was repetitive and often dull. Scratching, itself, is such a limited technique that it has never really made for interesting solos, so it seems folly to make it so prevalent. DJ J.D. Monroe was at his best throwing out pure sounds, particularly remixed vocal tracks. It would be nice to see the group use this to a further extent.

The performance also contained very few standout solos, though this is a minor complaint. The two strongest soloists in the group, trumpeter/bandleader Tim McLaughlin and guitarist Mike Pardew, are both skilled performers who will only improve with time. McLaughlin was a particularly sure-fingered player, bringing strong elements of classic and fusion jazz into the mix, while Pardew bears more than a passing resemblance to some of the better jazz-rock fusion players.

Overall, Eleven Eyes deserves just about any positive expectations one is willing to heap on it. It will be nice to see the band branch out and join the upper echelons of Eugene's music scene currently occupied by other tight, experimental groups, such as the tango outfit Mood Area 52. Maybe the Eyes will go on to bigger things, but there's no reason to get your hopes up. It's not like we can expect one group to save jazz or anything — though that would be nice.

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