

Just jammin'

'Sunday Night' finds its musical niche

By Larry O'Connor
staff writer

The set on "Sunday Night" doesn't include a rake or a garden hose. But the spirit of the garage jam session is certainly there.

Since its debut in October on NBC, the hour-long music show (seen at 1 a.m. on Channel 4) has found a niche in terms of diversity. Tired of watching Billy Idol shadow box his way through a video or listening to an artist endlessly plug their album on a talk show? "Sunday Night" might be the answer.

Musical acts — both established and new — are featured along with archive film clips of great artists. Also, there's a first-rate house band that includes Marcus Miller and Hiram Bullock on guitar, Omar Hakim on drums and Philippe Saisse on keyboards.

But one of the most interesting parts of the show is when musicians from differing styles get together. Past segments have included Paul Simon producing Eddie Palmieri Band and James Taylor performing Latin American music with Milton Nascimento.

Future possibilities are endless. Jools Holland of the British pop band Squeeze and co-host of the show thinks of the ultimate musical pairings.

"I would like to get Ray Charles on with someone you wouldn't expect like, hmmm... Talking Heads," said Holland, in a telephone interview from New York. "Now that would be a good show."

EVEN HOLLAND and fellow host, David Sanborn, are from different musical perspectives. Sanborn is a highly acclaimed saxophonist, working with the likes of David Bowie, James Brown, The Eagles, Bruce Springsteen and Roger Waters of Pink Floyd.

Holland is keyboardist with the often-praised British pop band, Squeeze. The TV stage, though, is quite different than the musical one.

"There's a lot of sex and violence on television," he said. "So, obvious-



Co-hosts of "Sunday Night," which debuted in October on NBC and is seen at 1 a.m. on WDIV-TV, Channel 4, are Jools Holland (left) and David Sanborn.

ly, I'm getting my share of sex and violence."

The zany English popster is no stranger to television. In fact, he fronted a music show, "The Tube," in Great Britain.

"The Tube" offered quite an array of musical acts. Then again, that might be attributed to Holland's vast tastes that include jazz, boogie-woogie, ska and funk.

Both Holland and Sanborn have been involved in selecting guests for "Sunday Night." The philosophy is fairly basic — avoid the commercial flash-in-the-pan and stick with those who've had a profound impact on contemporary music.

"There's a uniform pattern in

the people we've chosen to be on the show in that they're all good at what they do," Holland said. "We're not just going to have someone on just because they have the sexiest bottom at the moment."

As musicians, Holland and Sanborn have an added insight to the business. Holland said it can be an advantage with guests.

BUT HE quickly adds that he's careful things don't become too technical for those of us who think a chord is something you plug into a wall and fret is what you do at tax time.

The spontaneity of live music is what Holland believes will sell the show in the long run. Already,

there's been plenty of that since October.

"When we had Squeeze on (Sunday night), Hiram Bullock filled in at rhythm guitar," he said. "He put some things into the music we hadn't heard before. That lifted the whole thing and made it exciting."

By taking a different path, Holland is expecting overnight success. Though he does expect the "Sunday Night" audience to grow steadily.

"I think people are underestimated," he said. "People have more intelligence and a broader sense of taste than they are given credit for. Hopefully, we're introducing them to people they've never heard of before."

Strange Bedfellows: It's a 'marriage' made in music

By Larry O'Connor
staff writer

To the naked eye, there might not be a street big enough to cover Strange Bedfellows.

The makeup of the six-member band has more potential for divisions than General Motors. First, there is the married couple of Jan and Jim Blaschak. Then there are the two guys and the four women.

But the real powder keg is trying to pair two lead singers, which Strange Bedfellows attempted in the beginning. Experiments like that usually end in an exchange of gunfire.

But animosity between singers Missy Gibson and Beth Yates? No way, right?

"I think there was at first," said Gibson, whose charming, yet powerful voice fronts Strange Bedfellows. "I think we were threatened by one another. We weren't mean to each other or anything. One day we all sat down and sorted it out."

So, the plan is to have Gibson sing lead. Yates follows with harmonies, fronting the band on a couple of numbers. The rest of the group backs up the vocals with some polished musicianship and everyone will live happily ever after.

"It's a happy medium," said Yates, 22, of Birmingham.

EXCUSE US, Strange Bedfellows. While you're at it, there's the Middle East conflict and the troubles in Northern Ireland to solve.

Ironically, Strange Bedfellows was the end re-

sult of a split in another band, Of All Things. Some of those members went on to form Walk the Dog. Jan Blaschak (bass) and husband, Jim Blaschak, (guitar) put together their own group that includes Shawn Scannell (keyboards) and Syndi Bauer (drums) along with Gibson and Yates.

In a short amount of time, Strange Bedfellows has been able to head off any potential rifts and laid the foundation for some rather heady music.

Gibson writes most of the songs and performs them in a delicate manner. She is a theater major at Wayne State University, a trained opera singer and a self-proclaimed poet.

On stage, Gibson exudes a warmth without being smarmy, a perkiness that doesn't induce vomiting.

"I don't want to come on too strong," said Gibson, 21, a Birmingham native. "I want people to like me for what I am. I'm a simple person. I love people."

Love might be too strong, but one can easily take to Strange Bedfellows. At a recent performance at the Hamtramck Pub, a five-week layoff was apparent in terms of raptures. Also, one member was felled by a migraine headache and another was suffering with bronchitis.

Still, the band alone. The sound is a sweet mix of past and present.

"I grew up listening to the music of the 1960s and 1970s," Yates said. "I see our band having roots in that. But I feel we're polished in a new music sound."

Strange Bedfellows includes Jan Blaschak (bass), husband Jim Blaschak (guitar), Sean Scannell (keyboards) and Syndi Bauer (drums) along with singers Missy Gibson and Beth Yates.

BAND MEMBERS are busily polishing up a six-song cassette that will be released within the next couple of months. The tape is being recorded at Tempermill Studios in Livonia. Plans include to play live at least twice a month and concentrate on writing material.

For Jim and Jan Blaschak, who live in Southfield, Strange Bedfellows is a dream come true. Both — they met while waiting for a SEMTA bus at Wayne State — had played in a number of cover bands before Of All Things came about.

Differences in direction split that group (Jan Blaschak said the break up was amicable), but she feels Strange Bedfellows has a better chance for survival.

"Being in a band is like being married anyway," she said. "You either make it or you don't."



IN CONCERT

- **HOLY COWS**
The Holy Cows will perform on Monday, Jan. 23, at The Blind Pig, 208 S. First St., Ann Arbor. For more information, call 996-8555.
- **MISSION IMPOSSIBLE**
Mission Impossible will perform on Monday, Jan. 23, at Rick's Cafe, 611 Church, Ann Arbor. For more information, call 996-2747.
- **WIPERS**
The Wipers will perform on Tuesday, Jan. 24, at The Blind Pig, 208 S. First St., Ann Arbor. For more information, call 996-8555.
- **BIG BOX O' NINES**
Big Box O' Nines will perform on Tuesday, Jan. 24, at Rick's Cafe, 611 Church, Ann Arbor. For more information, call 996-2747.
- **ROMANCE**
Romance will perform on Wednesday, Jan. 25, at Jagers, 3481 Elizabeth Lake Road, Pontiac. For more information, call 681-1700.
- **ROOM SERVICE**
Room Service will perform on Wednesday through Sunday, Jan. 25-29, at the Studio Lounge, Wayne Road, one block south of Warren Road, Westland. For information, call 729-2540.
- **CHISEL BROS.**
The Chisel Bros. will perform on Wednesday, Jan. 25, at Rick's Cafe, 611 Church, Ann Arbor. For more information, call 996-2747.
- **HERRAZZ**
Herrazz and Vibratory Sound will perform an all-ages show on Wednesday, Jan. 25, at The Blind Pig, 208 S. First St., Ann Arbor. For more information, call 996-8555.
- **FRANK ALLISON**
Frank Allison and the Odd Sox will perform on Thursday, Jan. 26, at The Blind Pig, 208 S. First St., Ann Arbor. For more information, call 996-8555.
- **FLASH BACK**
Flash Back will perform on Thursday, Jan. 26, at Rick's Cafe, 611 Church, Ann Arbor. For more information, call 996-2747.
- **KNAVES**
The Knaves will perform Friday and Saturday, Jan. 27-28, at Ashley's, 8538 Telegraph, near Joy Road, Redford Township. For information, call 531-1311.
- **REGULAR BOYS**
Regular Boys will perform on Friday and Saturday, Jan. 27-28, at Sully's, 4758 Greenfield, north of Michigan Avenue, Dearborn. For more information, call 946-5377.
- **ROBB ROY**
Robb Roy will perform with special guests, New Logic, on Friday, Jan. 27, at the Hamtramck Pub, 2048 Canfield, off I-75. For more information, call 365-9760.
- **DARK CARNIVAL**
Dark Carnival will perform on Friday, Jan. 27, at Lili's 21, 2930 Jacob, off Jos. Campau, Hamtramck. For more information, call 875-4555.
- **HOLDEN CAMPFIELD**
Holden Campfield will perform on Friday and Saturday, Jan. 27-28, at Griff's Grill, 49 N. Saginaw, Pontiac. For more information, call 334-9292.
- **HEARTBEAT**
Heartbeat will perform on Friday and Saturday, Jan. 27-28, at Jameson's, 1812 N. Main, Royal Oak. For more information, call 547-6470.
- **ANTI-FASHION**
Anti-Fashion will perform along with special guests, Static Alphabet, on Friday, Jan. 27, at Psychick's, 2922 Caniff, Hamtramck. For information, call 872-8934.
- **SECOND SELF**
Second Self will perform on Friday, Jan. 27, at The Blind Pig, 208 S. First St., Ann Arbor. For more information, call 996-8555.
- **HOME WRECKERS**
The Home Wreckers, formerly Loved by Millions, will perform on Friday, Jan. 27, at Rick's Cafe, 611 Church, Ann Arbor. For more information, call 996-2747.
- **TREMOR REVIEW**
Junk Monkeys, Bottery X, Frank Allison & The Odd Sox, Clocyde, 3-D Invisibles, Sleep, Volebeats, Viv Akalidren, The Moon Men, True Blue Hearts and Static Alphabet will all perform at the Tremor Review '89 on Saturday, Jan. 28, at Saint Andrew's Hall, 431 E. Congress, Detroit. The show starts at 8:15 p.m. For more information, call 961-6352.
- **BLUES FESTIVAL**
The Progressive Blues Band, The Butler Twins, The Alligators, Zoon and The Paycoats along with Little Junior Comedy will all perform from 8 p.m. to 2 a.m. Saturday, Jan. 28, at the Alvin's Winter Blues Festival. Advance tickets are available at Ticketmaster outlets. Alvin's is at 5756 Cass, Detroit. For information, call 832-3355.
- **THE FEW**
The Few will perform on Saturday, Jan. 28, at the Hamtramck Pub, 2048 Caniff, off I-75. For more information, call 365-9760.
- **KAREN MONSTER**
Karen Monster will perform on Saturday, Jan. 28, at Lili's 21, 2930 Jacob, off Jos. Campau, Hamtramck. For more information, call 875-4555.
- **BLUE FRONT PURSUADERS**
The Blue Front Pursuaders will perform on Saturday, Jan. 28, at The Blind Pig, 208 S. First St., Ann Arbor. For more information, call 996-8555.
- **JEANNE & THE DREAMS**
Jeanne & The Dreams will perform on Saturday, Jan. 28, at Rick's Cafe, 611 Church, Ann Arbor. For more information, call 996-2747.
- **COWBOY JUNKIES**
The Cowboy Junkies will perform on Tuesday, Jan. 31, at The Blind Pig, 208 S. First St., Ann Arbor. For more information, call 996-8555.

LOCAL

Here are the top 10 songs receiving airplay on WDRP-FM's (90.5) "Detroit Music Scene," which is heard 4-5 p.m. Sundays (repeated 5:30-6:30 p.m. on Tuesdays).

1. "Checking Out," Reputations.
2. "At Hill," Colorful Trauma.
3. "Awaken at Twilight," It's Raining.
4. "Boomerang," Empty Set.
5. "Tainted Up," 22 Cavo Gods.
6. "Let Me Out," Marc Lademas.
7. "Street Lines," Oriental Spex.
8. "I'm Sick of You," Cody Jarrett.
9. "Firing Line," Bobby East.
10. "First in Line (Live)," Romantics.

COUNTRY

Here are the top 10 songs receiving airplay on WCKX-AM.

1. "Song of the South," Alabama.
2. "Spanish Eyes," Willie Nelson.
3. "That Old Wheel," Johnny Cash.
4. "Let's Get Started, It We're Gonna Break My Heart," Sauter Brothers.
5. "Change of Heart," The Judds.
6. "Chained in Stone," Vera Goodie.
7. "Deeper Than A Holler," Randy Travis.
8. "I Sang Dixie," Dwight Yoakam.
9. "Don't Waste It on the Blues," Gene Watson.
10. "If You Ain't Lovin' (You Ain't Livin')," George Strait.

COLLEGE

Here are the Top-10 songs receiving airplay on WDRP-FM 90.5, campus station at Oakland Community College in Farmington Hills.

1. "Head Hunter," Frost 242.
2. "Silver Rider," Souk York.
3. "Stand," R.E.M.
4. "Flashback," Ministry.
5. "24/7," Grant Hart.
6. "Just Like Arcadia," Psyche TV.
7. "New Light," Ballies Band.
8. "New Big Prize," The Pall.
9. "Hands Off," Red Lorry, Yellow Lorry.
10. "I'm Al," Ofra Baza.

REVIEWS

TRINITY SESSIONS

Cowboy Junkies

This took me by surprise. Such an innocent looking album cover masking a powerhouse of emotion. This is the second LP from the Cowboy Junkies, a Canadian band. Their first consisted mainly of cover versions of other people's songs, so this LP gives the first taste of their original work, and boy, what an appetizer.

We are introduced immediately to the haunting vocals of Margo Timmins when she sings the first song, "Mining for Gold," a cappella. Her voice is velvety smooth and lulls the listener into a melancholy trance. Upon hearing her gentleness, it is easy to miss the harsh realities of the lyrics.

The album then rolls into second gear when the rest of the band joins in discreetly for "Misguided Angel." With Margo Timmins' brother, Michael Timmins, on guitar, we hear her direct the song to her family members, trying to convince them that the man she has chosen to love is right for her. With the overwhe-



ing air of sadness with which the song is delivered, I believe her!

This sadness is the predominant mood of the entire LP. It's perfect for listening to, if you just want to wrap yourself up in self-pity, and fall into a corner with your favorite bottle of whiskey.

On a slightly technical note, it's worth mentioning that this album was recorded in a church using only one microphone. This is particularly remarkable because of the fine quality of the sound and especially the beautiful balance of the diverse instruments used, backing vocals and, of course, bass and drums.

— Cormac Wright

NEW YORK — Lou Reed

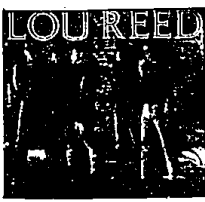
The Reagan Revolution is said to have left debt, homelessness and a wider gap between the rich and the poor.

Also it has left Lou Reed quite cynical.

That is certainly evident on the fourth leader of the Velvet Underground's latest offering, "New York" (Sire). Reed leaves no 1980s stone unturned, addressing topics such as AIDS, toxic waste, extinction of whales, Vietnam vets and Kurt Waldheim.

His picture of this decade is not a pretty one, but it's real. It's one thing to ramble in vague generalities about current times, but nothing can quite stack up to the way Mr. Reed can sum up the experience.

As the album progresses, Reed gets more wound up. He doesn't take a jab at money-grabbing politicians and racist preachers, he plays them. Friend of the liberal, the Rev. Jesse Jackson, even takes some heat along with the Pontiff on "Good Evening



Mr. Waldheim." "If I ran for President and once was a member of the Klan/Wouldn't you call me on it the way I call you on Farrahfahn."

Despite his obvious disdain for the 1980s, Reed doesn't leave without looking into the future. The bluesy "Beginning of a Great Adventure" reflects an artist who, if anything, is uncertain about lies ahead.

Aside from the lyrical content, the musicianship of Mr. Reed is excellent. His down-and-dirty guitar style ranks right up there with Keith Richards at times.

The minimalist approach of Reed is stark and yet so powerful.

— Larry O'Connor

3 —Violent Femmes

The Violent Femmes use a wash tub and a couple of acoustic guitars to relay their musical message. What is there in the end is, well, a wash tub and two acoustic guitars.

"3" (Giant/World Circuit) is the Milwaukee trio's first LP in nearly three years and hardly ranks as a grand musical statement of these times.

Perhaps the Femmes are a classic example of how the changing trends in music can make you out-dated very quick. The Violent Femmes, for all their pluses, sound like a very ordinary band here.

This time out, the Violent Femmes took a barebones approach into the studio. Overdubs didn't take place nor did a lot of session accompaniment. The idea was to come as close to their live sound as possible without putting out a live album. Spontaneity is at the forefront of the VF sound.

In the beginning, the Femmes succeed. A certain crispness exists when Gano begins to sing the opening



track "Nightmares." And, yes, it's quite likeable.

But then things take a turn down, repetitive avenue. Sophomore is the only way to describe Gano's compositional "Fat." The core of the number is about wanting a former girlfriend to get fat so "she'll take me back." Deep stuff, there.

Then there is the piano stricken number "Nothing Worth Living For," which drowns in its own mellow self-pity.

What "3" needs is direction. It neither stops nor goes. A few cuts off this disc certainly are keepers. But for the most part, "3" is a wayward bound.

— Larry O'Connor