

He returns from past with 'Ghosts'

By Larry O'Connor
staff writer

Eric Andersen rubbed guitar necks with the likes of fellow folkies Bob Dylan, Phil Ochs and Tom Paxton in the Greenwich Village during the early 1960s.

Undoubtedly, the 40 something generation would be impressed. But to those of us who were in diapers at the time, such associations don't carry the same weight. Or so Andersen has found on his recent tour.

"I recently did a show in Boston at Harvard," said Andersen, who will perform Tuesday, Sept. 26, at the Ark in Ann Arbor. "I had a kid come up to me after the show and say, 'My mother made me come down here tonight.' The next night, he brought all of his friends down."

Such incidents only make Andersen smile even more. He's cultivating a new younger audience with his timeless brand of folk that is rich with imagery.

Andersen has released his first album in 12 years in the United States, "Ghosts Upon the Road" (Gold Castle Records) in his comeback volley into what has become a crowded folk field. Andersen shows them how it's done in this sort of autobiographical release that is brimming with life and energy.

Andersen didn't drop out of the music business. He released three albums in Europe. He lives in Oslo, Norway, with his wife, who is an artist, and their three children.

The Pittsburgh, Pa., native, who was turned on to the music of Elvis Presley and the literary works of Jack Kerouac at an early age, has come to appreciate American culture even more.

"TO LIVE over there is a very distilling experience," Andersen said. "You can get the real juice of the American fruit through the books and good music that gets through there."

"You don't become more European, you become more American than anything."

But America had forgotten about Andersen, or so it had seemed. After his widely-acclaimed "Blue River" LP (Columbia), he cut three LPs for Arista records during the '70s. Those didn't exactly shake the charts and Andersen and Arista parted company. He didn't bother pursuing a deal, heading instead to Europe.

"It was deemed I was not a pop artist," he said.

Andersen not only kept his folk guitar tuned, he also wrote a play "Bird Cage" and



"Ghosts Upon a Road" is Eric Andersen's first album release in the United States in 12 years.

is working on a film script for "Ghosts Upon the Road" as well. Then the singer-songwriter began working with Ronald Fierstein and Steve Addabbo, who managed and produced folk artist Suzanne Vega. Suddenly, home seemed like a wonderful place.

Andersen returned in the midst of a folk revival here where the Tracy Chapmans, Suzanne Vegas and Michelle Shockeds are something of the Dylans, Ochs and Paxtons of the '80s.

RECOLLECTIONS OF the Greenwich Village days cannot be helped. Neither can the

comparisons to Dylan, which were loosely based at best. Andersen had to live up or live down the tag of the "new Dylan."

"I hear his new album is really great," he said. "Maybe I should hold on to that."

"Dylan was great. He really opened the first doors. Not only were his songs inspirational, but so were his guts."

Andersen, though, prefers to concentrate on the present.

Eric Andersen will perform Tuesday, Sept. 26, at the Ark in Ann Arbor. For information, call 761-1451.

IN CONCERT

• MENTHEY COULDN'T HANG

Men They Couldn't Hang will perform Monday, Sept. 25, at the Blind Pig, 208 S. First St., Ann Arbor. For information, call 996-8555.

• JUICE

Juice will perform Monday, Sept. 25, at Rick's Cafe, 611 Church, Ann Arbor. For information, call 996-2747.

• LAUGHING HYENAS

Laughing Hyenas will perform with guests Tar on Tuesday, Sept. 26, at the Blind Pig, 208 S. First St., Ann Arbor. For information, call 996-8555.

• INFINITONES

The Infinitones will perform Wednesday, Sept. 27, at the Blind Pig, 208 S. First St., Ann Arbor. For information, call 996-8555.

• MISSION IMPOSSIBLE

Mission Impossible will perform Wednesday, Sept. 27, at Rick's Cafe, 611 Church, Ann Arbor. For information, call 996-2747.

• ABRAHAM NIXON

Abraham Nixon will perform Wednesday, Sept. 27, at Club Heidelberg, 215 N. Main, Ann Arbor. For information, call 663-7758.

• BURNING SPEAR

Burning Spear will perform Thursday, Sept. 28, at St. Andrew's Hall, 431 E. Congress, Detroit. For information, call 961-MELT.

• R.H. FACTOR

R.H. Factor with Dave Edwards will perform Wednesday/Saturday, Sept. 27-30, at Jagers, 3481 Elizabeth Lake Road, Pontiac. For information, call 881-1700.

• ORANGE ROUGHIES

Orange Roughies will perform with guests Hippodrome on Thursday, Sept. 28, at S.D. Club, 1215 N. Main, Royal Oak. For information, call 589-3344.

• IODINE RAINCOATS

Iodine Raincoats will perform Thursday, Sept. 28, at the Blind Pig, 208 S.

First St., Ann Arbor. For information, call 996-8555.

• SATTA

Satta will perform Thursday, Sept. 28, at Rick's Cafe, 611 Church, Ann Arbor. For information, call 996-2747.

• WIG

Wig will perform with guests Moi Trifid on Thursday, Sept. 28, at Club Heidelberg, 215 N. Main, Ann Arbor. For information, call 663-7758.

• SUN MESSENGERS

Sun Messengers will perform Friday, Sept. 29, at the Blind Pig, 208 S. First St., Ann Arbor. For information, call 996-8555.

• KING DEES

Jamie King and the King Dees will perform Friday/Saturday, Sept. 29-30, at Rick's Cafe, 611 Church, Ann Arbor. For information, call 996-2747.

• FRANK ALLISON

Frank Allison and the Odd Sox will perform Friday, Sept. 29, at Club Heidelberg, 215 N. Main, Ann Arbor. For information, call 663-7758. The band will also perform Saturday, Sept. 30, at the Apple Fest, Mill Street, Plymouth. For information, call 455-4159.

• ROBERT PENN

Robert Penn will perform Friday, Sept. 29, at Moby Dicks, 5452 Schaefer, Dearborn. For information, call 581-3650.

• CUPPA JOE

Cuppa Joe will perform with special guests Old Killer on Friday, Sept. 29, at the Hamtramck Pub, 2048 Canfield, off I-75.

• BOOTSEX

Bootsex X and the Lovemasters will perform with Let's Be Frank on Saturday, Sept. 30, at Alvin's, Cass Avenue, north of Warren Avenue, Detroit.

• TRINIDAD STEEL

Trinidad Steel Band will perform Saturday, Sept. 30, at the Blind Pig, 208 S. First St., Ann Arbor. For information, call 996-8555.



Frank Allison & The Odd Sox will perform on Saturday at The Apple Fest in Plymouth.

Artists pay tribute to jazz great

By Brian Lysaght
staff writer

Some of the biggest names in jazz take the stage at Orchestra Hall tonight to pay tribute to the late drummer J.C. Heard.

They aren't doing it for money, they are doing it for the fund, and for Heard, of course, the hard working drummer who died last year.

The fund is the J.C. Heard Memorial Fund established by Heard's son, Eric. The lineup tonight is impressive and owing to Heard's 50-year presence on the jazz scene.

Trumpeter Dizzy Gillespie, drummer Max Roach, and pianist Ahmad Jamal will join local acts drummer Roy Brooks, the tap-dancing Sultan, pianist Mr. B. Francisco Mora's Latin Jazz Ensemble and the big band Heard fronted for seven years.

For anyone new to jazz, this concert offers a variety of styles — the bebop sound with which Gillespie and Roach gained fame during the 1940s and '50s, the swing sound that Heard's 13-piece orchestra favors. Mora's Latin rhythms, Brooks' modern style and Mr. B's relicking boogie-woogie piano work.

Heard was considered one of the finest swing-style drummers in the land, but he prided himself on versatility as well.

THE PLANNING FOR a tribute concert began soon after Heard died last September at age 70, but it took nearly a year to arrange schedules. "We all saw need to pay tribute to J.C. Heard publicly because he was so important to us," said Jim Fleming, whose Ann Arbor-based entertainment agency worked with Heard. "He was an eternal optimist

and positive person."

All the musicians were selected because of their friendship with Heard or because they had worked with Heard. Gillespie, Roach and Jamal are all longtime friends.

Even the venue, Orchestra Hall, is significant. Renamed the Paradise Theatre, it was a big stop in the 1940s and '50s for Duke Ellington, Count Basie and other touring bands. Heard played there when he played in Cab Calloway's band 1942-45.

Eric Heard said the scholarship fund's first recipient is Larry Tucker, an 18-year-old drummer from Detroit's Northwestern High School. He said he hopes the concert will be an annual affair and the scholarship to be awarded regularly as well.

WALT SZYMANSKI, a trumpet player and the band's arranger, said the band has struggled

since the death of its founder.

"Everybody was pretty depressed because he had so much energy," Szymanski said.

Szymanski led the band at the Montreux Detroit Jazz Festival this month. They are trying to rehearse monthly, and may slim down to nine pieces, he said.

Szymanski said the orchestra would remember Heard tonight by playing his theme song "Coastin' with J.C." without a drummer, something they first did in a concert shortly after Heard's death last year. Drummer Brooks said he admired Heard's work with the "Jazz at the Philharmonic" all-star bands.

The benefit concert starts begins at 8 p.m. Tickets are \$10 and should be available at the door. Call 833-3700 for more information.

COLLEGE

Here are the top-10 albums receiving airplay on "Detroit Music Scene," which is heard 4-5 p.m. Sundays (repeated 5:30-6:30 p.m. Tuesdays) on WDRR-FM 90.9.

1. "Man Acts from Motor City," various artists.
2. "All Roy's Revenge," All.
3. "It's Beginning To And Back Again," Wire.
4. "Nim," Public Image Limited.
5. "Why Should I Do You Out? (12-inch)," George Clinton.
6. "Skid Roper and the Whirling Spun," Skid Roper and the Whirling Spun.
7. "King Swamp," King Swamp.
8. "Love and Rockets," Love and Rockets.
9. "Tin Machine," Tin Machine.
10. "Workbook," Bob Mould.

LOCAL

Here are the top-10 songs receiving airplay on "Detroit Music Scene," which is heard 4-5 p.m. Sundays (repeated 5:30-6:30 p.m. Tuesdays) on WDRR-FM 90.9.

1. "Object," Nemesis.
2. "Deliverance," Naming Mary.
3. "Sunday," Litter.
4. "Pace Away," Allison's Ghost.
5. "Charlie," Cuppa Joe.
6. "Nightingale," Doe Boys.
7. "Steroids," No Right No Wrong.
8. "Burl Ground," Cover 13.
9. "I Can't Change the World," Art School.
10. "Strike First," The Rogues.

REVIEWS

THESE PEOPLE ARE NUTS

— various artists

L.R.S. Records opens up its vaults on this decade-long retrospective, highlighting 22 artists who have recorded under its progressive/hip banner — and providing a pretty fair overview of the 1980s new wave and college radio scene, at least L.A.-style.

Many of these acts — Olngo Bongo, Buszcocks, English Beat — were new music heavyweights a few years back. Others still are. Fine Young Canbals, this year's pop phenom, is well represented by "Johnny Come Home," a track off its self-titled 1983 debut. R.E.M. is represented by "Superman," a track from "Lila's Rich Pagent" its critically praised 1985 album.

The album also includes "Nothing Achieving," a 1977 Police song that doesn't appear on any of that bleached blond trio's U.S. albums. Depending upon critical orientation, or one's age upon original release, the album's more familiar



tunes are either cherished memories or best forgotten musical trash. Even label master Miles Copeland apparently wants it both ways. The inner line is dotted with snippets of mostly unfavorable reviews his acts received from the acid-penned pop press.

No matter. For our money, the Go Go's "We Got the Beat" remains a canny mix of surf guitar and cheerleader chant. "The Future's So Bright I Gotta Wear Shades" by Timbuk 3, a sweetly cynical Dylan send up, and The Alarm's "The Stand" the best U2 song Bono never wrote.

And, for our money, this is a collection well worth having. (Special local note: The Wayne County represented is a transvestite singer who made a UK semi-splash in the late 1970s and subsequently changed his name (and sex) to Jayno Counto no doubt to the great relief of metro Detroit and its residents.) — Wayne Peol

LIVE FAST, DIE FAST — WICKED TALES OF BOOZE, BIRDS AND BAD LANGUAGE

— Wolfsbane

Another new trans-Atlantic offering. This time it's a heavy metal band clutching their batch of endorsements by the likes of English music magazines "Sounds," "Kerrang" and "Metal Hammer," etc. etc.

Now, when I say heavy metal, cast from your mind any thoughts of Twisted Sister, Ozzy Osbourne or Faster Pussycat. These bands are only in the nickel and dime slots compared to Wolfsbane.

To quote singer, sorry, vocalist, Blaise Bayler: "Don't try to search up a more eloquent phrase for the music because heavy metal does just fine. And if it doesn't, then you've obviously lost touch with what real good, dirty, filthy, uncooked and downright uncouth heavy metal is all about."

"I'm really sick of all these bands that can't come and say they're



heavy metal. They all say, 'Hard rock' or 'Hard T' or whatever, but that's a load of rubbish! We're not a bleeping rock band, we're a bleeping heavy metal band!"

Indeed, I think we get the picture now. The unusual twist to this Anglo debut is that it is released on Rap Master Rick Rubin's Def American Label, which includes the likes of the Cult, Beastie Boys and Run D.M.C.

But don't be misled by this. The only rasping done here will be the sound of your head against the nearest wall.

This LP is raw, unexpurgated deluge of over-the-top, bombastic double bass drums and guitar licks at the speed of sound.

If you're sick of pseudo-intellectual bands righting the world's wrongs, or prancing pop bands showing their choreography, Wolfsbane puts the moron back into metal. This is the optimum combination. — Cormac Wright

LIVE IN PARIS — Burning Spear

OK. So like Peter Toth and Bob Marley is beyond you. Me, too, mon. You don't have to be a reggae aficionado, buff or maven to like this double live LP.

In fact, perhaps, there isn't a better introduction to the Caribbean flavored music than Burning Spear's eclectic array of reggae.

After all Winston Rodney says he's the master of reggae music. So pull up a chair and be prepared to learn. The live feel of this double LP is perfect for the party music being laid down. (Incidentally, Burning Spear lands Thursday at St. Andrew's Hall. Don't say we didn't tell you.)

If the sereno, if not haunting at times, rhythms don't draw you in to the musicians' hip should, Burning Spear, while providing a steady Caribbean beat, doesn't avoid some of today's modern technology. The synthesizers and keyboards anger well

with trumpet and saxophone pieces here, which are provided by an all-woman team (a rarity in the male-dominated reggae scene).

And, of course, let's not forget the main man behind it all, Winston Rodney, who writes and sings all the songs on "Live in Paris" (Slab). He provides the vocal emphasis when needed without interfering with the flow of the music.

His songs possess almost a trance-like quality to them. There seems to be no beginning, middle or an end, just pure well-orchestrated music. Numbers fade from one to the other with little fanfare.

What Burning Spear does here, in essence, is capture a moment. A moment that seems repeat listening.

— Larry O'Connor