

Arts & Culture

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The Bad Plus Bringing Jazz To The Aztec

BY JACK MORGAN

A three-man jazz troupe is heading to San Antonio. I caught up with Reid Anderson, bass player of The Bad Plus, in New York, where the group is just back from a European Tour.

Their music has an elemental, austere feel, while somehow at the same time feeling full of sound. I asked Reid how he described their music.

"The instrumentation is acoustic bass, drums and piano," he said. "At the core we're jazz musicians and we're improvisers, but we don't consider that we have to make our music sound like jazz necessarily. We try to bring a strong energy to what we do."

Reid said about 85% of their live performances are improvisational. Of course, jazz is a structure onto which musicians improvise. Anderson explained the concept.

"Each piece is a song. Each piece is a structure that we know. But on top of that structure we're always improvising," Anderson said.

Their take on the old Tears for Fears song is refreshing.

"Oh, yeah, 'Everybody Wants to Rule the World,' " he said.

I've included excerpts from three different songs in this story. Hit "listen" above to hear them.

Arts San Antonio is bringing The Bad Plus to the Aztec Theater on Tuesday, September 30. I asked him what San Antonians who come can expect.

"We have a new record that just came out a couple of weeks ago named 'Inevitable Western.' We're going to play a lot of the music from that new record, as well as things from past recordings," Anderson said.

Ticket information is here: www.artssa.org/the_badplus/
More Bad Plus info at: www.thebadplus.com