

Innovative Django

By IFAN PAYNE

REVIEW

IN MY notes for the recent Loose Tubes concert in St David's Hall I wrote that it was one of the most significant music groups of our day.

Similarly, I noted, Django Bates, the keyboard, tenor horn player and composer was one of the most significant musicians of our day.

Trailing riffs of splashy chordal clusters in Cardiff's thriving, characterful and packed Four Bars Inn on Tuesday, Bates proved yet again that he is one of the most innovative and startling of performers.

Ken Stubbs's First House Quartet provided a satisfying context for Bates. Sporting an outrageously colourful architectural tie and looking like a

hyperactive 13-year-old trying to appear 15 in order to get into an adult film, he lived within his music.

He stole the show by either prodding out trial keyboard chords or silently fingering imaginary horn solos as in Ornette Coleman's *Chronology*.

In his own *Sweet Williams* he created cascades of colour with an aural imagination which is to jazz what Frank Miller's visual imagination is to comics.

An excited boy in the jazz toy shop, he is an exotic Messiaen jazz bird who is one of the most stimulating musicians to be heard in this country today.

See and hear him again at the Four Bars Inn with The Iains on March 29.