

Innovative Tubes display discipline

REVIEW

By IFAN PAYNE

A RIOT of jazz eclecticism, Loose Tubes continue to re-define their medium.

How sad, then, to see an unfilled St David's Hall last night for a concert by what is one of Britain's most innovative and invigorating music ensembles.

Loose Tubes may look a motley crew of 20 sartorially-divergent instrumentalists but out of the innovations of Stan Kenton, via the scintillations of Genesis, this band has created an exciting and unique musical experience.

The ensemble is as freewheeling as the players are free spirited; an object lesson in how freedom can exist within constraint, and self expression within discipline.

Of the several tunesmiths in the band, Django Bates and Eddie Parker are a particularly well balanced pair of composers. Parker is the more colourful, his music full of exotic kaleidoscopic musical hints and tonal references.

Bates is the more powerful, a thrusting, brilliant composer and performer who surely has a claim to being one of the most exciting and important musicians working in this country today.

A Loose Tubes concert is too rich an experience to detail and Thursday's event was no exception. This was post modernist jazz at its best.

What other band could make Balinese rhythms swing so infectiously as in the minimalist, finger-snapping jazz gamalan that was *Shadow Play*.

What other band could move me to tears with the transformation of an Irish folk tune into echoes of the Andes, the sound track to *Heavens Gate* and to New Orleans funeral marches only to melt into African rhythms whose infectiousness made the cleaned up pop Africanism of *Graceland* seem simple and inconsequential by contrast.