

50 YEARS SINCE HENDRIX FIRST WOWED BRISTOL

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FIFTY years ago today, a certain Jimi Hendrix played Bristol's iconic Locarno – and, as our reviewer said at the time, left it reeling with the sound of his way-out guitar. The day after that famous gig in 1967, Nicholas Williams wrote in the *Bristol Evening Post*: “Backed by a two-man group, he bombarded his audience with an unbelievable wall of sound, which he somehow coaxed from his guitar. He played it in the usual way. He played it under his arm, over his shoulder and between his legs. He scraped it on the stage floor and over the amplifiers – he even plucked the strings with his teeth.”

“Something has to snap – and it did. He broke a string at the end of the show.”

“But that’s nothing unusual. I buy several sets a week”, Hendrix said.”

Jimi and his band played for an hour with a set that included a cover of Bob Dylan’s *Like A Rolling Stone*, as well as *Hey Joe*, *Stone Free*, *Can You See Me*, *Killing Floor*, *Mercy Mercy and Third Stone From The Sun*.

Admission cost 6 and 3 – around £5 in today’s money – and those who were there would say it was worth every penny.

And it wasn’t just the gig itself that was memorable – as DJ Warren Davies told Hendrix fan website *Lifelines* it was quite the after-party too.

“I was the DJ at the Heartbeat Club upstairs from the Locarno. The trio

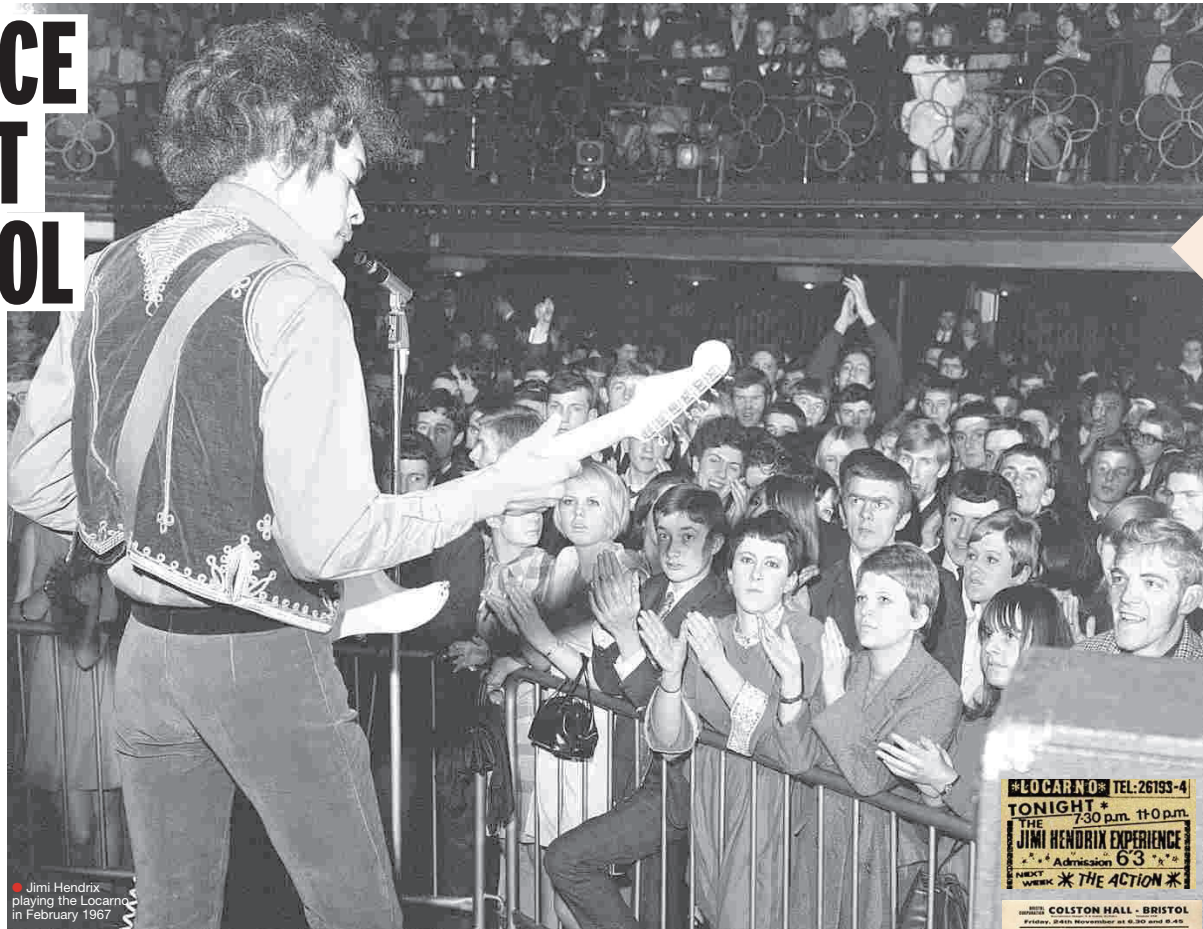
“He bombarded his audience with an unbelievable wall of sound, which he somehow coaxed from his guitar. He played it in the usual way. He played it under his arm, over his shoulder and between his legs. He scraped it on the stage floor and over the amplifiers – he even plucked the strings with his teeth.”

1967 gig review

came up after their show and stayed ‘til we closed at 2am. They came over and complimented me on some of the music I had played – particularly a Booker T set of six tracks. One of the tracks featured Booker T playing piano instead of Hammond, a track they didn’t recognise. So we sat cross-legged on the floor talking about Booker T until the manager wanted to lock the place at 3.15am.”

Hendrix was clearly a fan of Bristol. He returned later that year to play the Colston Hall – with fellow legends Pink Floyd on the same bill.

Our report from the time said: “In the hall, youths hurled abuse at performers, but the trouble died down as officials brought the shouting minor-



● Jimi Hendrix playing the Locarno in February 1967

ity under control. But the incidents did not spoil a triumphant return of Hendrix to the first city to put him into the charts. He paid tribute to Bristol over the microphone and then launched into the wildest, noisiest pop music of all... He received a frenzy of applause.”

Post reader Thomas Brooman last year wrote to us with his memories of that special gig.

He said: “The whole bill was incredible The Jimi Hendrix Experience, The Move, The Nice, Pink Floyd (or The Pink Floyd, as they were billed at that point), Amen Corner and Eire Apparent.”

“This was a seriously good line-up for any teenage fan and it still excites me after all these years even to write those names down. “Jimi Hendrix was magnificent. For one thing he was loud enough to be heard – actually very loud indeed.

“His music was a true combination of performance and truth, showmanship and love. He was relaxed, sexy, musically eloquent and the band was just extraordinarily exciting.

#LOCARNO TEL: 26193-4
TONIGHT * 7:30 pm - 11:00 pm
THE JIMI HENDRIX EXPERIENCE *
Admission 63 * * * * *
NEXT WEEK * THE ACTION *

COLSTON HALL - BRISTOL
Friday, 24th November at 8.30 and 8.45
Tickets: 12.50, 12.10, 10.50, 8.50, 6.50



● Posters for the 1967 Locarno, top, and Colston Hall gigs

“At the end of his set there was none of that naif destruction thing but Jimi brought things to a close with an overpowering display of controlled distortion and feedback. He turned to leave the stage and nonchalantly threw his guitar over his shoulder high into the air in an arc behind him.”

● Were you at the gig? We'd love to hear your memories. Let us know at epletters@b-nm.co.uk

● For more info on all of Hendrix's gigs see <http://jimi-hendrix-lifelines.net>

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