

Therapy for the soul, too



ERROL NAZARETH

Rhythms N Rhymes

As a musician who sees “the healing and joyous effect music has on people” on a fairly regular basis, Ron Davis didn’t think twice about participating in an upcoming benefit concert for the Canadian Music Therapy Trust Fund.

“I live that effect,” the pianist tells me. “It’s why I gave up lucrative careers and why I weather the harsh environment of the music business — to share and bring that feeling to people.”

The Music Therapy Centre, which is operated by the Canadian Music Therapy Trust Fund, offers several programs that use music to improve its clients’ mental, physical, and emotional health.

Some of its services include weekly musical meetings for individuals with polio or post-polio syndrome, a program for those affected by autism, and programs for adults and children with Down syndrome.

Davis and his trio will be joined by DK Ibomeka, Andrew Cash and a few other musicians at Hugh’s Room on Monday.

All proceeds from the show and silent auction go toward supporting music therapy programs for medically fragile children.

“I’ve known about and admired music therapy for years,” Davis says. “I was always intrigued by the power of music. I used to live with a caregiver who looked after geriatric Alzheimer patients and she would tell me that even after they were unable to speak or connect in any way, she could always reach them through music.”

“That illustrated the primal power of music and gave me insight into the therapeutic potential of music,” he adds. “We know that music affects the brain, the mind, the emotions. Its use as a therapeutic tool seems to me to be a necessary and important response to the needs of people out there who are suffering and in distress.”

Davis says that after Jodi Greenwood, the centre’s clin-



Ron Davis is thrilled to be involved with the upcoming Canadian Music Therapy Trust Fund benefit concert.

ical manager, contacted him, he researched the organization and was blown away by its work.

“They’re dedicated to helping children, people with mental health challenges, people with addiction issues and many others through music,” he says.

“Not only is this work inherently good and valuable, but it strikes me that the health system could help many others in need, and even reduce

other more expensive treatments and medication with the greater use of music therapy.”

The fund’s website is filled with powerful testimonials from organizations like Autism Canada and the Alzheimer’s Society and inspiring stories from music therapists who’ve witnessed the magical effect music has had on the people who’ve passed through the centre’s Bloor West clinic.

One of my favourite com-

ments on the site is credited to Dr. Robert Zatorre, a neuroscientist at Montreal’s Neurological Institute, who has studied how music affects the brain.

“We’ve done a lot of research on music because it touches on almost all of the most complex mental functions that we are capable of. Music is incredibly complicated, but we seem to be wired to do this.

“If you don’t have music

you won’t die, but you won’t be happy.”

NOTE: Tickets for Monday’s concert are \$25 advance/\$30 at the door. For tickets, please call Hugh’s Room at 416-531-6604. For more information, email info@musictherapytrust.ca or call 416-535-0200. And for information on the fund, visit musictherapytrust.ca

Visit Errol’s blog at www.musicinthemessage.blogspot.com.

Now
HEAR
This!

Errol’s can’t-miss list:

1 Turkish fusion supergroup **Minor Empire** celebrates its debut disc, *Second Nature*, Thursday at Lula Lounge. \$15 advance. 9 p.m. 416-588-0307

2 **David Baxter** launches his new CD, *Patina*, at the Dakota Tavern Tuesday with a list of friends that includes **Justin Rutledge**, **Treasa Levasseur** and **Jadea Kelly**. \$10. 9 p.m. 249 Ossington Ave.

3 You’re likely to hear some great singing if you check out **Lisa Particelli’s Girls’ Night Out Jazz jam** at Chalkers Pub Wednesday. 247 Marlee. 416-789-2531.