

Tlingit musician records jazz-rock album

By BOB KOWELUK
Tundra Times Reporter

An original, jazz-rock album, "Black and White Raven", was released in Alaska last week by it's songwriter, producer and artist Archie Cavanaugh, a Tlingit indian.

Cavanaugh, who grew up in Kake, sings lead vocals on the 10-song album, and is backed by 14 musicians, including Tony Bellamy and Pete Depoe, both former members of the "Red-bone" band.

"The style of music in this album, 'Black and White Raven' is a blend of jazz, rock and rhythm and blues," Cavanaugh said. "It's got an appeal to an age group of, say, teens to people fifty years old. It's got a broad range of appeal because it's an easy enough rock that you can listen and dance to it and enjoy it all at the same time."

"Tony Bellamy who plays lead guitar, and Pete Depoe, on drums were about ready to jump out of their socks, screaming 'let's take this band out on the road!'", Cavanaugh said after a rehearsal six months before the album was recorded.

"The album has turned out to be a real diamond. I think we've got that real feeling, that real flow and clarity. I tried to maintain a real basic, straightforward sound composed of the basic rhythm tracks, steering clear of electronics as much as I possibly can, trying to duplicate in a sense the actual performance sound on stage—the sound that we can do in the studio we should be able to do on the stage. And we've proved it rehearsing six months before we went to the studio."



ARCHIE CAVANAUGH

Cavanaugh's wife, Melinda, co-wrote seven of the album's songs. "My music comes from an inspiration, to a word, to an emotion to a sentence," Cavanaugh said. "It goes through that whole process. Writing my lyrics and music at first is just a conglomeration of all these things

which eventually evolves into the final product in music for."

"The Beatles came out with their songs just as I was learning music. The Beatles taught me originality through their style. I had picked up singing in Sunday School and later found that guitar music accentuated cer-



The symbol of the Black and White Raven.

tain feelings within me," said Cavanaugh.

"I went through the hard rock thing in high school. It was just a matter of turning up the amplifiers to the maximum and screaming at the top of my voice. It's through experience that you learn to tone down, make it cool, and make the music work and express itself," he said.

For the album, Cavanaugh formed his own corporation, Black and White Raven, Inc. He recruited private backing, and served as producer of the album.

The use of original Tlingit art, created especially for the album, reflects Archie's dedication to his Native traditions. The theme "Black and White Raven" is drawn from Tlingit legend of how Raven turned from white to black by getting stuck in the

smokehole of grandfather's longhouse while stealing the sun, moon and stars.

The album's promoter, Ray McCan was also an entertainer for ten years. "I don't know of any major artist that really had their origin from the state of Alaska. I think Archie would probably be the first. He's got something to offer. It's genuine. A product that will appeal not only to his people, but to all people. He's got a rare ability to paint an emotional picture with sound and does it well," said McCan.

"Black and White Raven" is available on both record and tape in many Alaska record stores. It is also available by COD mail order from Black and White Raven Inc., P.O. Box 2072, Seattle, Washington 98111.