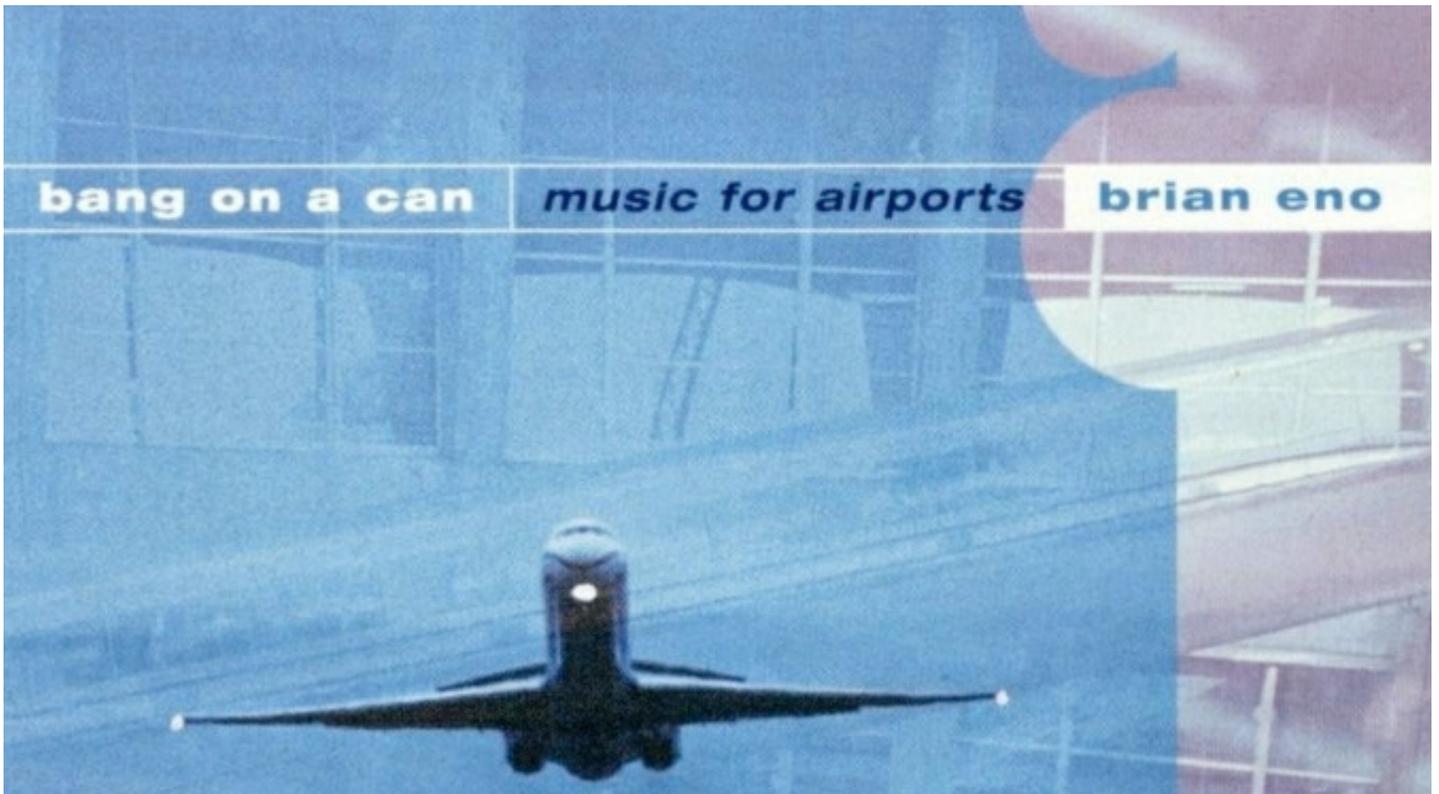


Blog San Diego

Music, Art and Lifestyles



CONCERTS

MUSIC FOR AIRPORTS AT THE SAN DIEGO AIRPORT (ARTPOWER)

OCTOBER 27, 2015 | ERIC NIELSEN | [LEAVE A COMMENT](#)



Bang on a Can All-Stars played Brian Eno's Music for Airports last night at the San Diego airport, in Terminal 2. I wasn't sure what to expect. Music for Airports is one of my favorite albums of all time and I was excited to hear this interpretation of the album, though at the same time I couldn't bear it if it were off balanced, or if too much liberty was taken.

The setting was very cool, neutral, upstairs at the very most west end of the new building accompanied by some awesome, disturbing and appropriate ambient sounds of the airport. The last ticketing terminal was taken over by ArtPower (UCSD's impeccable curator of world class talent, and host of this evening's performance). There was a small raised generic stage, low key lighting and folding chairs for maybe 200 people (they were all filled). Of course the normal airport travelers were there, enjoying a random piece of ambience shining from the terminal building.

I knew from the first piano notes of 1/1 that I would not be disappointed. There is no other sound so distinguishable as the first notes of Eno's Music for Airports and Bang on a Can treated it authentically and with great taste. Chills filled my body from the top of my crown chakra all the way down my spine, as only the best of sounds can do, and the room sat rapt in attention of those notes that form the mantra of the ambient genre. The sounds of the godfather were rising from the halls of the San Diego airport. Thank god and the father! The treatment and compositions were a delight to the fans in attendance.

If you don't know this 1978 album, you are missing out. If this was your first exposure to these godly sounds, you had a great introduction. This was true art and we all got to be there. The setting and pacing of the concert was true to the integrity of the original and the crowd hovered in joyous celebration of the music we have grown up with, meditated to, made love while it played, did yoga with and had acupuncture treatments to. These were the sounds we have used for decades to calm and slow down life. Bang on a Can honored the intention of Eno. I'm sure when he saw it premiered outside of London, he felt the same way.

It was the setting that set the natural boundaries. Everyone was rushing around with their bags, trying to make it through security. The public announcements going off every five minutes created the juxtaposition intended by this piece of music. The crowd sat quiet and contemplative with hints of Mona Lisa smiles curling up the edge of their faces. The audience was completely satisfied with this authentic rendition and showed it with their warm, standing ovation.

The organic instruments were played in such a way as to barely register the difference between the electronic original and the live version. The organics made it slightly more human and emotional than the original and for a live concert it seemed appropriate. The bowed and bent sounds on the strings and the slight upswells, all played into the audience's deep connective reaction to this performance. Listening to this album over and over for years and years, it was nice to get a swell going that was more than the record. We couldn't help but transport to all those memories, that this album has been the foundation for, across all of our years.

In combination with the airport, ArtPower did a great thing by bringing this performance to our town. It was as close to going to church as it gets, though in the airport. The airport that screams ambient noise down to me in Ocean Beach every day. It was a small gesture from the folks at the airport against the heaviness of the metal flying above me constantly. But, it did much to engender my feeling towards Terminal 2.