

ADAM IRVING

## Dixieland

In tiny rooms  
Smoky clubs  
On small stages  
All over the world  
Old guys  
Play Trad Jazz  
For those who want to hear it

In those moments  
A picture emerges  
Clearer than any CD  
With more information  
than a shelf full of books

A document of the past  
Unaffected by change  
Unaffected by rock n roll  
Unaffected by anything  
That popped out after 1945

Insane Dixieland plays  
Like it did eighty years ago  
Then the solos flow freely

Double the speed  
Lose half the instruments  
Slow it down

The clarinet plays  
The band drops behind him  
They play so softly  
That I hear ice hit the side of the glass  
Somewhere in the room

And then ragtime kicks in  
Explodes like a powerful drug  
As strong as it ever was

This is a play  
With different actors for every performance  
It's just a play  
But what a play!

Play your solos  
Play with no rehearsals  
Play your jazz  
Play the songs  
Play the familiar riffs

And they say no man can stop time  
But that's bullshit  
*These* guys can stop time

They defy the world that has made them look older  
When they play  
they laugh at their cancer-ridden lungs,  
their cirrhosis of the liver,  
dodgy backs  
and weak hearts

The past is forever  
In that moment

So savour the moment  
in thirty years it will be  
a faded photocopy of a photocopy  
played by those who can't quite remember

Shut up and let them play

Let them play

Play