

Sinatra & The Modal Nodes

Contributed by ISWWR-95
Monday, 12 May 2008

Sinatra's Bith Secret! ISWWR investigators have come across several photographs linking Frank Sinatra to the Bith music group, The Modal Nodes! Bith were a peaceful, craniopod species native to the planet Clak'dor VII. Fully adapted to a civilized, high-technology lifestyle, Bith were found Galaxy-wide at all levels of society, most notably as engineers, scientists, intellectuals, consultants, and musicians. The Modal Nodes were members of the Intergalactic Federation of Musicians (IFM), and maintained a reputable standing within the trade guild. The band's matching stage costumes were somber in tone and reflected the moody aesthetics attributed to their preferred style of music. Although the Modal Nodes enjoyed success on the Intergalactic circuit, they never rose to great prominence beyond the Outer Rim Territories worlds, owed largely in part to the fact that they incorporated no vocalists into their act. This is where, possibly, an alliance with Frank Sinatra came into play. Apparently, Sinatra made a point of studying Lirin Car'n (member of the Modal Nodes) kloo horn playing as a means of cultivating a more free-flowing vocal style — he noticed that Car'n used a tiny airhole at the side of his mouth to sneak breaths when playing. Sinatra would employ a similar technique, and so be able to hold notes for incredibly long durations. In addition to this, Sinatra started to jog and swim underwater to develop his lung capacity — which enabled him to continue a musical phrase through a stanza without pausing, or breaking the note, for breath. Sinatra's legato-style of singing/phrasing took pop singing in new directions when most singers of the 1940s were keen to emulate Bing Crosby. The bandleader of the Modal Nodes, "Fiery" Figrin D'an, was extremely demanding. He was highly critical of every performance and criticized the band heavily if they were to miss even a single note. With the exception of Dorenian Beshniquel-player Doikk Na'ts, Figrin owned all of the band-members instruments and equipment. Figrin was never shy when it came to doling out orders to the others. Many times D'an would bring the Modal Nodes into financial difficulties with his sabacc gambling habits. In order to supplement their earnings & losses the rest of The Modal Nodes may have formed an alliance with Sinatra. They would teach Sinatra galactic music and techniques and Sinatra would pay them highly for it! From time to time members of the Modal Nodes would appear with Sinatra during performances, according to rumors, mostly, in Las Vegas. Sinatra would refer to them as his "bald friends". Audiences simply thought it was part of the act with humans in alien costumes (movies & television shows featuring outer-space aliens were popular at the time). Sinatra probably spent the most time with Car'n, shown below, as he gives his mentor a look during a performance.

Sinatra's galactic musical education was a wise investment. His early recordings found him singing in near-tenor range, hitting a high F on "All or Nothing At All" (1939) or "Where's My Bess", whilst being equally adept in the lower register, the low E on his 1962 recording of "Ol' Man River" being a prime example of such. His phrasing was also impeccable, getting to the heart of a song by emphasizing words and lines in ways that made a song more personal, whilst his ability to hold notes, sing above or behind the beat and rest on a note were hallmarks of a singer fully in command of his instrument. The duration of Sinatra's involvement with his Bith friends is uncertain. Have Bith musicians influenced other recording artists of the time? The investigation continues... Evidence #: ISWWR0000042 Submitted by J. Lamb Below: An illustration of a Bith musician