

Even without the Who, 'It's been a good year'

People frequently ask me, "Why don't we get any good concerts down here?" I guess this questioning stems from the fact that the Rolling Stones and the Who have never been here. Well, be that as it may, we still did have some good shows at ISU last year which should have sufficed even the most diverse musical appetite.

In the popular music category, Carole King started off her first tour in three years here and put on one of the most moving performances that we had seen. The Lettermen were here, as was Glen Campbell. Campbell's show was nothing more than a TV variety show without the TV; and lest we forget Barry Manilow.

The rock genre was also represented well in Normal-Bloomington, especially with the likes of Electric Light Orchestra. Although guitarist Fred Lynne confessed after the show that the performance was not ELO's best, they still managed to combine concise musical arrangement with electronic visual effects.

The ZZ Top cancellation on the day of the show caused many people's opinions to turn sour about the group. However, Entertainment Committee is trying to get ZZ Top back to ISU to recoup the apparent financial loss incurred last Feb. 21.

One of the year's biggest disasters was the Deep Purple show of Feb. 11. Not only was the audio mix atrocious and the show boring, but the bulk of the ISU rock populous did not attend the show. As a result, the threat of damage to the Fieldhouse by an outside audience was only too eminent. That was averted, however, by the steady audience walkout. Deep Purple broke up over the summer, and former guitarist Tommy Bolin died of an alleged alcohol overdose in Miami in November.

The Boston, Starcastle, Jim Peterik show was filled with surprises and unfortunately Boston wasn't one of them. For a power trio, Rush did a pretty good job in August but headliners Head East seemed to overplay themselves. Kan-

sas did a show at Wesleyan early in the year and have been in Pekin and Peoria since; and let's not forget the Rollow Radford show starring Bill Quateman which played in the Ballroom a year ago today.

One of the best folk concerts of the year was the Aliota, Haynes and Jeremiah show last January. Not only are they good instrumentalists, but their combined vocals are some of the best heard. Another excellent concert was Hary Chapin's ISU comeback last September. The starkness and intensity of "The Mayor of Candor Lied," then unreleased, is something I'll never forget.

One of the year's mild disappointments was Joni Mitchell's February concert. She seemed aloof during the LA Express-dominated concert. Shortly after her ISU debut she broke off with the Express and drummer/boyfriend John Guerin. Maybe she did the right thing. Another letdown was the Shawn Phillips concert last March. It seems that the hired audio hands didn't know the difference between a potentiometer and a VU meter. The result was a sound mix that was inexcusable. Phillips was forced to stop playing numerous times to give the soundies a chance to get their act together, which they didn't.

New Friends brought in the Rosehip String Band in April and the same month saw Megan McDonough in the Ballroom. Mary Travers headlined Rites of Spring last year and the Dwayne Hoover band played their famous ballads throughout the Normal-Bloomington area.

Last year also saw an adequate spicing of jazz, especially in the form of Stan Kenton, Maynard Ferguson, George Benson and Buddy Rich, who appeared twice at Fannie's Trolley last year. Last year we also saw the Duke Ellington Orchestra and the old-time, bluesy jazz sound of the Memphis Nighthawks in the Prairie Room just last November.

On the soul scene, Entertainment Committee hosted the Spinners in April along with the Notations who

appeared at Rites of Spring a week later with ISU's own Black Arts Jazz Band. Roy Ayers entertained an ecstatic audience in the Ballroom. Also last November the snap judgement of booking the Commodores in the Auditorium proved to be a disco/soul crowd pleaser as well.

Being close to Chicago means that the blues scene easily includes us here at good ol' Normington. Corky Siegel was featured at Capen last November;

band which has excelled in popularity since Rites. John Newbold, director of Public Safety termed last year's Rites as the "quietest" he's ever seen.

Classically speaking, ISU's own piano virtuoso Ton-Il Han was given a recording contract on Phillips Records last August. The Chicago Symphony Orchestra performed here as did violinist Yehudi Menuhin. Also seen this year was Footnote, a quartet made up of a bassoonist, cellist, pianist and

SoundScenes

Ralph Baum



a show traditionally put on by radio station WILN. In regards to a return performance by Siegel put on by 'ILN, program director Duane Moss was unavailable for comment.

Jim Schwall was here numerous times throughout the year. His memorable performances of livid blues occurred once at Tobin's Pizza Place in Bloomington, at the Lay-Z-J ranch 10 miles outside of town, and aboard the Julia Belle Swain, steaming leisurely down the Illinois River.

Papa John Creach played his old time blues in an Entertainment Committee freebie last May and Luther Allison appeared throughout the year at the Red Lion. He will be there again this Thursday. If you really want to get down to the roots of blues, stay tuned for Sleepy John Estes and Hammie Nixon at the Prairie Room Feb. 18. If you can't wait until then to enjoy the blues, Willie Berry plays regularly at the Normal Galery in his familiar country style.

This year's Rites of Spring proved to be a peaceful and music filled occasion as usual. The headliners were Heartsfield and Thin Lizzy, a rock

female vocalist. Not only did they play some interesting interludes, but they also incorporated visuals into their repertoire.

Comedy saw the astute off-the-wallism of Proctor and Bergman presented by the Union Board. The success of their humor was a result of reproducing ISU and Normal-Bloomington landmarks and figures into their act. Last September also saw the gentle musical humor of Victor Borge, presented as part of the Celebrity Series.

All in all, it's been a pretty good year as far as music was concerned. There was something for everybody, as there always is, and so far, this year already promises to be just as highlighted as last year. Tentatively Jeff Beck will be here in February and Bread will appear with David Gates in March.

Aside from Estes/Nixon, New Friends of Old Time Music has scheduled Ken Bloom for the 28th of this month and Jim Post will be featured tonight at the Coffeehouse. Good tickets for Average White Band and Sea Level are also still on sale. Have a good '77.

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