

Arts & Entertainment



Ken Nolley, Bill Braden and Ron Finne look on at the Conference.

Review:

Jazz Production

by Dave Jory

Friday, March 8, marked another of the all too few jazz productions that the Paramount NW people have put together. The result was not always jazz, but usually a good show.

There were the multiple problems that are always around when four bands are thrown together, equipment failures, three long intermissions, and unevenly lengthed sets. But if it didn't bother you to hear different brands of music and you weren't a hard-line jazz, then the night was at least interesting if not always good.

The four bands were fairly dissimilar. The first set was the Hank Crawford Quartet, a basically jazz group with blues overtones. The second and most "controversial" (the most people sitting it out in the lobby), was Graham Central Station, a rock and roll band in the Ike and Tina Turner style. The third was Weather Report, which was both the shortest and the most warmly received, and the fourth was Herbie Hancock, which was probably the best and longest. The total time for the show was 6 hours. A lot of music, to say the least.

Hank Crawford started the evening off with a cool-sounding series of blues struts. He and his band eased the audience into some solid if unspectacular music, one the best tunes being, "The Lady Sings the Blues," with Crawford's sax laying down jazz riffs backed with blues rhythms from the quartet. The set was warmly received, considering the gen-

eral lack of previous knowledge about just who Hank Crawford was.

The second set was a shocker for the mostly jazz-oriented audience. Graham Central Station rolled down the aisles from the back in an obviously rehearsed intro that was polished, tight, and showy. The band broke into one of the tunes off their new album, very funky with much movement, color and yet with the sound being green and inexperienced. Their costumes were as loud as their music, neither of which was at home in the atmosphere of the theater. Larry Graham, the band's leader, is bass player for Sly Stone and his act reflects the master's influence. While they were well-rehearsed, their enthusiasm seemed shallow and the crowd response was the same.

Weather Report played with an excess of energy, most notably by Dom Um Rao, a wiry South American percussionist who was all over the stage, playing a wide assortment of gourds, rattles, bells, and some other not so easily identified pieces. Joseph Zawinul, the European piano and synthesizer player, led the group through some loose, avant garde music that was well received by the crowd. Wayne Shorter, a great sax player, Ishmael Wilburn, and Alphonso Johnson played a very exciting and competent backup. The set only lasted for 35 minutes, though, and Weather Report only got through two numbers, including "Boogie Woogie Waltz," off their album

SWEET NIGHTER. The crowd was disappointed, to say the least.

At long last, Herbie Hancock came on stage at 11:30 and broke into some of the best tunes of the show. He and his band played two cuts off their latest album, "Watermelon Man" and "Chameleon," both of which were beautifully done. He also did an extended version of a song called "The Hornet," with a long intro in which he talked about his own (and the crowd's) fear of the insect. The entire segment lasted better than an hour and a half, with the steadily shrinking crowd moving up to dance before the stage and in the aisles. Despite the late hour, people were getting into the music and Herbie Hancock and his band responded with an enthusiastic display of talent.

Considering the incongruity of the bands and the seat-numbing length of the program, the Jazz Spectacular was an enjoyable night. It's just too bad that the promoters included so much music.

Concert review:

Joni Mitchell

by Rob KaSavage

Reflecting back, the recent Joni Mitchell appearance at Portland's Civic Auditorium could be described as "exquisite". From her dazzling entrance in a low-cut, backless, red halter-dress, to her exit after two encore songs, Miss Mitchell spun a sensual web of enchantment over the appreciative Portland audience. The beautiful Canadian singer combined vocal versatility with sensitive, haunting lyrics to produce a musical effort which was easily one of Portland's finest concerts of the year.

Beginning the concert, a talented, but relatively unknown group called the L.A. Express (the backup group on her latest album) performed a series of progressive jazz tunes. Featuring Tom Scott on the saxophone, the group displayed a tight, dynamic style that broke the pre-concert jitters of the audience.

Greeted by a standing ovation, Joni Mitchell slipped onto the stage. Opening with six tunes including "Woodstock," and "Free Man in Paris," Miss Mitchell combined with the L.A. Express in a jazzy but still extremely pure style.

After a ten-minute break she reappeared, but this time unaccompanied. Wearing a powder blue dress with her honey-colored hair cropped just above her breasts, she performed with a style and polish all her own. Switching from guitar, to dulcimer, to piano, and then back again, the delicate, versatile quality of her voice, as well as her talented musicianship, held the audience spellbound. Singing from all her

works but emphasizing songs from her latest album, "Court and Spark," and her third album, "Ladies of the Canyon," she sat playing and singing, alone on the immense stage. Included among her selections were "For the Roses," "Blue," "The Circle Game," "You Turn Me On I'm a Radio," and "The Arrangement."

Conversing with the audience, accepting various gifts from her fans, the singer seemed to emanate the warmth and beauty of her songs. Soloing for nearly two hours, she compelled the capacity crowd to utter silence. Lacing her performance with even more beauty, she presented a new, yet untitled love song which the audience reacted to with much enthusiasm.

L.A. Express joined Ms. Mitchell again and the concert returned to its somewhat jazzy flavor, but maintained an honest and sincere quality. Closing the performance with "Raised on Robbery," she stepped-off the stage in the same way as she had entered, with a standing ovation. After four minutes of wild applause, she came back on stage and did a double encore singing "The Last Time I Saw Richard," and "Twisted."

With the end of the encore, the audience silently filed out the giant glass doors of the Auditorium. After three hours of beautiful music by a truly extraordinary lady, they could ask no more. Reluctantly, they acknowledged that it was, indeed, time to let her go.

You Can't Take It With You

YOU CAN'T TAKE IT WITH YOU, a 1930's comedy of a young woman, Alice Sycamore, and her very unusual family.

Alice, to introduce her fiance's wealthy parents to her own family, plans a dinner party for the two. Comedy ensues when the guests appear on the wrong night and discover the insanity of the Sycamore family.

YOU CAN'T TAKE IT WITH YOU was written by Hart and Kaufman and will be directed by Carol Cioffi. It will be presented Thursday night April 4th at 7:30 p.m. and Friday and Saturday nights, April 5th and 6th at 8:15 in Smith Auditorium. Tickets may be picked up at Stevens and Sons and the University Box office. Or call 370-6243 to reserve tickets. Admission is \$1.50, W.U. students - free.

