

Police hold coliseum crowd in XTC

Review and photos by Doug Spaner

Our photographer didn't quite make it to the Coliseum Saturday night. She started having fun earlier in day, and we all know what happens when you start having fun ...

So, in lieu of the concert shots, we took a couple of pics out of the family album.

Sting has never looked so good!

Welcome to the eighties! While some people still consider it fashionable to argue the merits of the latest irrelevant offerings from such dinosaurs of Rock as the Rolling Stones, eight thousand people at the Coliseum Saturday night witnessed the real state of the art. The Police and XTC, two of Britain's most original and important contemporary bands, demonstrated the potential of rock music, and gave the audience an exciting glimpse into its future.

XTC opened the show with an hour

long set, drawn mostly from their latest release, *Black Sea*, and their critically acclaimed previous album, *Drums and Wires*. Although the quartet started slowly, seeming to lose the audience at times with their syncopated rhythms and complex guitar riffs, they gathered steam with each song. An extended version of *This is Pop*, featuring XTC's patented synthesizer-like guitars weaving a complex tapestry of sound, seemed to be the breakthrough. When the band kicked into a bristling version of their familiar *Making Plans for Nigel*, a responsive chord had clearly been struck.



Inspiration! Guitarist Andy Summers moments before composing another million seller.

Bless you, Sneezy

by Ray Giguere

Kudos to Don Whalen for bringing the ever popular Sneezy Waters back to Edmonton. Wednesday's performance in the Provincial Museum Theatre was another well received treat from the Edmonton Folk Music Festival Association.

In his own casual, light-hearted manner, Sneezy Waters gave the near capacity crowd a terrific time. No stranger to the Edmonton folk scene, Sneezy is better known for his work in *Hank Williams, The Show He Never Gave* which played the Princess Theatre last year. Waters is a master story-teller with a captivating personality.

Waters makes no pretense about his singing or playing abilities, which at times are downright horrible, but he has the power to make the crowd happy to be there, listening to his farcical songs about the real things in life. If the mark of a "great entertainer" is the capacity to make an audience feel that they are

participants in an event rather than spectators, then the term certainly applies to Waters.

With a repertoire that includes several Hank Williams tunes, *Hey Good Lookin'*, *Cold, Cold Heart*, a sparkling version of Willie P. Bennett's ballad *Me and Molly*, knee slappers like *Northern Boy*, and other old standards, it's easy to see where Waters gets much of his appeal. Combined with his unique delivery, the old material and classics shine with a brilliance that makes them seem new and original.

The audience even joined Waters for *Sawdust On the Floor of Your Heart*, the title track of his first album. At one point the show was stopped so that he could take a photo of the audience, who responded with cheers and applause.

Sneezy Waters has been around for about twenty years, and, if Wednesday's show was any indication, he should be around for another twenty.

Midler's madness

by C. Fertile

Energy crisis? Forget it. Harness Bette Midler. The power this woman puts out in one evening could light New York City for a month. *Divine Madness*, Midler's new movie is out and shouldn't be missed. That is — if you like raunchy, no-holds-barred humour. The movie gives us a look at a Midler stage show and makes you wonder what they left out.

A lot of comics abuse their audiences but how many can call the audience "scum-bags" and have them love it. Nothing is safe where Midler is concerned. She makes fun of British royalty (on Prince Charles: he's soo rich, but he's sooo ugly), the French, the Germans, and

everyone else including herself (you hit 30 and your body wants a life of its own).

She does some Sophie Tucker routines. She does Dolores DeLago, the toast of Chicago, a lounge entertainer with great ambition, no talent and no taste. She does a Shelley Winters imitation. She does a variety of songs that show the range of her voice. She sings a sad, sweet song while lifting her dress up. Believe me, *"The Leader of the Pack"* will never be the same.

She's backed up by the Harlettes (hmm), three women who do the doowah and dance in the background. They're great, too.

So, if you want a break from the daily grind, go and see *Divine Madness*. It is.



Loreen never could stand a man who smokes marker pens, even her idol, Sting.

The Police, on the other hand, started from strength and never looked back. This trio originally made a name for itself in England as high energy rockers from the "punk rock" era. But under the direction of their dynamic bass guitarist, Sting, they have fashioned a unique sound that fuses the hypnotic beat of Jamaican reggae with the driving energy of rock. Opening with *Don't Stand So Close To Me*, from their new album, *Zenyatta Mondatta*, The Police hit a series of peaks.

Showing amazing versatility, the band bounced from full-tilt rockers like *"Pour it On"*, (unrecorded), to ethereal reggae numbers like *The Bed's too Big Without You*, *Bring On the Night*, and *Walking On the Moon*. They never lost their way through extended versions of many of their songs, holding the

audience's attention with Sting's mesmerizing bass, Andy Summers chilling guitar chords, and Stewart Copeland's energetic drumming.

Sting held center stage throughout, with his unique, piercing vocals, (a highlight was his harmonizing with his own echoes on *Shadows in the Rain*); and his controlled soft-shoe shuffles, swaying with his bizarre electric upright bass. Only on the later songs, like *Roxanne* and the final encore, *So Lonely*, did his voice show evidence of wear.

The concert served notice that it may be time to stop looking to the tired old guard for musical inspiration. The Police and XTC, vanguards of the "new wave" of popular music, showed Saturday what rock is capable of. And it's exciting to be going along for the ride.

Unique Quartet

One of America's finest string quartets plays at SUB theatre Wednesday night. The Concord Quartet, artists-in-residence at Dartmouth College, are "in the first rank of chamber music groups" according to *Newsweek*.

Sponsored by the Edmonton Chamber Music Society, the Concord will play three quartets written for them by American composer, George Rochberg. They will thus provide local music lovers with a rare opportunity to hear important new music played by a major group. The *New York Times* called Rochberg's quartets, "The most enjoyable chamber music in years". The works are unusually songful for modern music, and one section is a set of variations on the Pachelbel Canon.

Rochberg, now 61, has stated many times that "the composer of today must re-establish a deep and firm connection with music again through a rapprochement with the past and its traditions. This is the only way he can break out of the bind of a narrowly modernist aesthetic and its minimalist tendencies. These quartets are, simply, my way of continuing to be a practicing composer who believes that music remains what it has always been: a sign that man is capable of transcending the limits and constraints of his material existence."

The Concord performs at 8 p.m. October 29. Special student rates for the Edmonton Chamber Music Society's 1980-81 series are available, and can be purchased at the door.



One of North America's top chamber quartets, the Concord, comes to SUB Wednesday night.