

Tears and Thomas taunt audience

By SARAH INGERSOLL

Mixed feelings prevailed in the audience's minds upon leaving the Aitken Centre Tuesday night, having seen the Blood, Sweat and Tears concert.

Many people were pleased with the performance; others disappointed. The latter opinion was probably due to the long delay in getting the concert rolling.

Because of a snow storm in Quebec, the van carrying the group's equipment, arrived some four and one-half hours late. As a result of this, the show didn't get under way until almost 9:00

rather than the scheduled 8:00.

The 'warm-up' band, "The Ishan People", was anything but that. The audience proved to be comparatively unresponsive, giving very little applause (with the exception of George and Bill).

The highlight of their act was when the lead guitarist performed a solo using his teeth. The Ishan People's reggae music, which included their version of 'I Shall Be Released', a Bob Dylan tune, did not go over well at all with the crowd.

The fact that few people were impressed with this band was made apparent when they left the stage relatively unnoticed.



Photo by Steve Patriquen

Following a 25 minute intermission, Blood, Sweat and Tears appeared, to the delight of the 1,200 fans present. The opening number performed by David Clayton Thomas 'Applause' received a great ovation. Among other songs performed, two were past hits 'Hi-De-Ho' and 'Lucretia McEvil'.

Their entire act was unique in that instrumental solos frequented the program. Of these, a tuba solo by band leader Dave Barger, during their rendition of 'And When I Die', demonstrated what truly fine musicians make up this eight-piece band.

Top-notch performances were given by Bill Tillman, on flute, and Larry Willis, on keyboards, with the reproduction of Chick Corea's 'Spain'.

Thomas, a Toronto native, has remained a truly talented singer over the years, and is capable of delivering a song with considerable sensitivity as he did in his latest recording 'You're The One'. A display of fine music was shown in their encore, 'You've Made Me So Very Happy', during which some of the audience

crowded around the stage to shake hands with Thomas and other band members.

Mention should be made here of the excellent sound at the Aitken Centre during the entire evening, especially when the brass section of B S & T performed.

It is not often that this city can get a high-calibre act such as Blood, Sweat and Tears and when it does, the audiences allow a snowstorm and a "not so hot" warm-up band to get them down and not appreciate excellent entertainment.

At the beginning of the show David Clayton Thomas said that this was his first trip to Fredericton. It is hoped that he and his band will return someday because as fine entertainment as theirs is difficult to find.

Gary Wood, promotions manager for Campus Services Limited (the organization that sponsored the concert), said of the audience turnout, "We were a bit disappointed ... but we have our heads up and are looking forward to the next one (concert)".



Photo by Steve Patriquen

Ballet Ys express contemporary themes

By ROSEMARIE HOPPS

The "Ballet Ys" (meaning ballet of our times) is a group of six young dancers who present a unique blend of classical ballet technique and contemporary choreography. The company was started in 1971 by Gloria Grant and Les Spits (now respectively artistic director and production director), and has toured to over 130 communities, bringing to people both mime and ballet.

Tuesday night's performance was definitely the product of a young company. They chose to express themes with contemporary relevance (such as female sexuality) set to contemporary sounds (such as the Echoplex sequence).

The section entitled "All that

wasted shame" remains the most prominent in my mind. This routine interpreted stages of female sexuality, from strangulation of sexuality through flaunting of sexuality to the stage where the women is in tune with her sexuality, and can cast off her cloak of shame. The dancer, Kathleen Trick, examined her two former stages of sexuality and rejected them, deciding instead to stand naked and unashamed. The last tableau of "All that wasted shame" showed the dancer naked, a portrait of the woman freed from shame about her body.

Echoplex, the opening sequence, showed dancers interpreting the music from a device that enables the musician to "reproduce sound phrases in swirling

repetitive sound phrases or in simple echoes." As the music echoed itself, so did the dancers repeat movements. Echoplex (choreographed by Noble Barker, one of the performers) was an energetic and interesting opening movement. It had all the brightness traditionally associated with youth. Costumes, designed by Judy Peyton Ward, were expressive of the youthful nature of this piece. Women wore striped blue and white gauchos and blue waistcoats, while men wore blue and white striped overalls.

"Desert", "The Conversation", "Nelligan" (concerning a poet and hero of Quebec who wrote poetry until the age of 19 and then entered a mental institution for the remainder of his life), "Sand

and "Thirty years later" completed the performance of "Ballet Ys". The only disappointment amongst these was "Thirty years later." This was meant to show the transition in dance formations from the 1940's to the 1970's. To my mind it failed in its effort, in that it did not adequately depict the difference in dancing styles. The other pieces, although different, were uniformly excellent.

The performance was marred by one problem. The troupe's van, containing their props, was stranded in snow in Riviere du Loup. As a consequence, the dances had to be presented on a bare stage. (Luckily the dancers had their costumes with them.) The lack of props did not

prevent the troupe from offering its Fredericton audience a chance to see some excellent dancing. However, a routine such as "Thirty years later" which was supposed to be set in the distinctive locale of a 1940's bar-room suffered from not having the visual dimension of stage properties.

Ballet Ys, presented by the Creative Arts Committee of the Universities of New Brunswick and St. Thomas, certainly deserved a chance to be seen. They have succeeded in their attempts to "combine classical ballet with contemporary choreography to produce a unique art form". This young company should be quite a success wherever they choose to display their talented and versatile dancing style.