

## Liona boyd-canada's first accomplished female guitarist

By VAUGHN FULFORD

We'd been waiting a few minutes when the house lights dimmed and immediately everyone's attention turned to the lone chair spotlighted in the centre of the stage.

An orange glow washed over the cool blue which bathed the chair and a young woman clad in a long pink gown with golden hair tied up, walked onto the stage, her Spanish-made guitar held firmly in her left hand.

This was, Liona Boyd, Canada's "first Lady of the guitar" who had held my interest for the past few months. Being a D.J. at CHSR allowed me to discover various artists I had not noticed before. I had for some time been aware of Liona Boyd but it wasn't until I had listened to some of her records and played them on-air that I became a real fan. When the opportunity for a free ticket to her concert on Jan 12 and two interviews, on by phone from Toronto and the other backstage after the concert were presented to me, I jumped at the opportunity right away. The telephone interview had gone well and was aired, but what would the performance be like?

Liona sat in the chair and the applause sparked by her appearance slipped to a hush. Without a word she positioned her guitar and was still.

The first plucks of the strings held a fascination for all. Would the live performance live up to the expectations? The soothing tones of that guitar dispelled any doubts and the delightful lilting and joyousness of her first piece brought smiles from everyone around me.

The evening progressed, I was content, finding myself simply letting the music flow over me, and at other times, scrutinizing and marveling at exactly what it was she was doing with her hands. Her left hand ran full lengths of the neck in agonizing contortions supplying intricate melodies with never a buzz or screech of strings. It was her picking hand which I found most beautiful, however. It did not so much move as flow and undulate with the music as a river or a brook. The fingers and the hand became on motion and the guitar was truly an extension of herself.

In Liona Boyd's guitar not only is the music real but the guitar itself is real and the woman and guitar convey a feeling of mutuality between the audience and the guitarist. Looking at the darkened faces of the audience and then back to this lady on the stage one felt the gap between them shorten, even disappear.

From familiar tunes from her recordings to a rendition of Beethoven's moonlight sonata the program went on. Intermission found me thinking of appropriate questions to ask her.

As the performance continued we were treated to some beautiful compositions employing harmonics. The night ended with an incredible piece which she had learned while in Guadalupe at Christmas sitting on the beach with a beaten-up Yamaha. It was really incredible a real "show-off" piece including techniques which simulated the sound of a snare drum. She was applauded back for an encore of "the Hummingbird" a piece from one of her albums, was presented with flowers and then it was over.

During the final piece it finally dawned on me that "I have to talk to this lady in a few minutes, what can I possibly ask which is relevant?"

Standing in the blueroom of the Playhouse with tape recorder strapped over my shoulder I listened as Liona talked quietly with an admiring young girl and then posed for photos for a local newspaper. Then it was my turn and it was decided that it was too noisy in that room for the interview.

Miss Boyd's possessions occupied only a small part of the dressing room. A Time magazine lay on the counter and she opened a sticker laden guitar case and carefully laid the guitar in it. Yes, I can say that she is as pretty a lady as depicted on her album covers. Nervously I hooked up my tape recorder and began the interview. Once it got rolling I lost most of my clutziness. It was quiet; in marked contrast to the applause of the audience. She was very easy to talk to, speaking easily with a soft stare which made me wonder why she would bother paying attention to me. The guitar lay at my feet and we talked for the better part of 10 minutes. She was tired, not having slept properly for the last three days and she had suffered from food poisoning three days earlier.

The interview went well and with a bit of editing came out quite even better for airing. With a vacancy for proper things to say I left thanking her and she smiled a goodbye. I walked from the Playhouse in the cold night air towards my friend's car, holding the program upon which was written "For Vaughn with thanks for the interview! Liona Boyd".

## Stratford theatre schedule

Stratford, Ontario, January 9, 1979 . . . Casting of *The First Part of Henry IV* and *The Second Part of Henry IV*, Shakespeare's two plays dealing with the reign of England's King Henry IV, was announced today by the Stratford Festival.

Several of the major characters appear in both plays. In these instances, actors will appear as the same character in both productions.

Leading Festival performer Douglas Rain will be seen in the title role of both *The First* and *The Second Part of Henry IV*. Other leading actors whose characterizations will carry through both plays include: Lewis Gordon as Sir John Falstaff, Richard Monette as Prince Hal and Jennifer Phipps as Mistress Quickly.

Martha Henry will appear as Doll Tearsheet, a character who appears only in *The Second Part of Henry IV*. The production will also feature Rod Beattie (Pistol), Mervyn Blake (Justice Silence), Max Helpmann (Lord Chief Justice), and Cedric Smith (Justice Shallow).

Appearing in *The First Part of Henry IV* will be Patrick Christopher (Owen Glendower), Alicia Jeffery (Lady Mortimer), and Stephen Russell (Hotspur).

Also appearing as the same character in both plays will be: Stewart Arnott (Prince John), Graeme Campbell (Northumberland), Margot Dionne (Lady Percy), Maurice Good (Westmoreland), Richard MacMillan (Francis) and Tom Wood (Poins).

As announced earlier, Peter Moss is the director of both productions. Design is by Daphne Dare, with John Pennoyer. Music will be composed by Gabriel Charpentier and lighting is by Michael J. Whitfield.

The Festival's production of these two plays is part of a continuing cycle, begun with *Richard III* in 1977. This year, with *Richard II* and *The First and Second Part of Henry IV*, the repertoire is being widened. In 1980, with productions of *Henry V* and *Henry VI* the complete cycle of history plays dealing with the Wars of the Roses will have been staged.

Shakespeare's cycle of histories begins with *Richard II* and carries through to the defeat of Richard III on Bosworth Field and the crowning of Henry VII as England's first Tudor monarch. Thus, between 1977 and 1980 the Festival will have mounted the full cycle of Shakespeare's English histories and will have stored these productions for future presentation.

Other members of the acting company appearing in *The First and Second Part of Henry IV* will include: Paul Batten, Christopher Blake, John Bluethner, Jessica Booker, Philip J. Craig, Peter Donaldson, Wilfrid Dube, Sophie Gascon, Jeffrey Guyton, Richard Hardacre, David Holmes, Geordie Johnson, Joel Kenyon, John Lambert, F. Braun McAsh, Robert McClure, Dion McHugh, Barbara Maczka, Bob Ouellette, Angelo Pedari, John Pollard, Pamela Redfern, Leroy Schultz, Rex Southgate, David Stein, Barbara Stewart, Winston Sutton, Michael Tatzke, William Webster, Ian White, John Wojda.

## Bj's Music

### ALBUM OF THE WEEK

Rod Stewart — *Blondes Have More Fun* (or do they?) Warner BSK 3261.

Rod has come out with an interesting bundle of songs to suit any type of music lover. The topics of all the songs is women, which Rod is quite mindful of since his split with former girlfriend Britt Ekland.

There are songs here for everyone; some good tunes to dance to, the usual ballads and a few rockers just to let everyone know that Rock 'n Roll is still alive and kickin'.

Lowdown on the tunes! "Do Ya Think I'm Sexy?" — what can I say except Rod's no dummy. This song is aimed at top 40 a bit at FM, and disco all at the same time. Impressive. "Dirty Weekend" is next. A good rock song that really shows where Rod's roots are at. "Ain't Love a Bitch" is a very lighthearted song despite sincerity of title. I expected some heavy philosophy but got references to Maggie. (Could it be that Rod wants "Maggie May" back?) Time for another ballad. "Best Days of My Life" would give one the feeling Rod is still looking back on Britt. "Is that the Thanks I Get" confirms that he is. "Attractive Female Wanted", which leads off side two is Rod's classified for a new girlfriend. The title cut, "Blondes (have more fun)" is another good rocker — Rod really belts this one out. "Last Summer" is next. An easy tune with some great flute work. Rod had left open a controversial line in the next tune, "Standing in the Shadows of Love", when he asks: "didn't I screw you right, well, didn't I?" Where's Rev. Jesse Jackson when somebody other than the Stones get in the act? Last cut on the album is "Scarred and Scared" an excellent ballad with some great musicians keeping Rod company.

All in all, an impressive album well worth adding to your collection. Best cuts: not a loser in the bunch. Rating — an incredible 9.2.

### NOTES & COMMENTS:

Whoever said that The Cars would never make it has been proved wrong. Their debut album (reviewed here in Nov.) has just recently been certified platinum. Let's just hope their second album is as good (instead of a flop a la Boston!).

Cop-out award of the year goes to the producers of "Midnight Special" who announced that they're moving to a disco format (on a trial basis) starting immediately. Rock won't be completely gone, but it'll be in the back drops . . . how revolting!!

Now for closing off, another swipe at the Aitken Center. I think it's time that the University told Gord Lebel to get off his butt and start getting out and looking for concerts and the like instead of sitting in his office all day. There haven't been any concerts here yet this year and students aren't going to save their money waiting for one. Let's get the show on the road!

Sorry about the missing "Grammy" award nominations that I promised. I wasn't able to get all of them in time for this week's paper.

## Chsr top 20

— as of January 15, 1979

1. I Just Wanna Stop (2) — Gino Vannelli — A & M
2. Time Passages (3) — Al Stewart — Arista
3. My Life (1) — Billy Joel — Columbia
4. Part Time Love (6) — Elton John — MCA
5. Sharing the Night Together (5) — Dr. Hook — Capitol
6. I will play a Rhapsody (7) — Burton Cummings — Portrait
7. You donat bring me flowers (4) — Barbra & Neil — Columbia
8. Fat bottomed girls (10) — Queen — Electra
9. A little more love (8) Olivia Newton-John — MCA
10. I love the nightlife (9) — Alicia Bridges — Polydor
11. Ooh baby baby (12) — Linda Ronstadt — Asylum
12. Trouble (13) — Ronney Abramson — True North
13. Hold the line (17) — Toto — Columbia
14. YMCA (11) — Village People — Casablanca
15. Promises (14) — Eric Clapton — RSO
16. Deadlock Holiday (16) — 10 CC — Polydor
17. Pretty girls (19) — Lisa Dal Bello — Talisman
18. How are you gonna see me now (18) Alice Cooper — Warner Bros.
19. Instant replay (20) — Dan Hartman — Epic
20. Le Freak — Chic — WEA