

Sarah great; Grapes raisins

**The Grapes of Wrath and Sarah McLachlan
Myer Horowitz Theatre
Saturday, September 30**

review by Rachel Sanders

The stage was dark and a dramatic silence fell as the audience sat expectantly awaiting Sarah McLachlan's first song to begin. In the dead silence, someone shouted "all right, Sarah!" and the spell was broken as everyone laughed and Sarah remarked "you're ruining my concentration!" Concentration or no, Sarah McLachlan was able to keep the audience mesmerized for sixty minutes during her double-billing with the Grapes of Wrath on Saturday night in Myer Horowitz Theatre. The success of this show, their first concert of a Canada-wide tour, was evident in the high demand for ticket sales. The hasty addition of a second show kept the two acts performing well past midnight before an enthusiastic crowd.

After the short break in her concentration, McLachlan started her performance with an a capella version of the traditional Irish folk song "My Lagan Love." This song demonstrated perfectly the control she has over her excellent singing voice. Her show also included most of the songs from her first album, including "Ben's Song," a song about the death of the cancer-afflicted child to whom her album *Touch* is dedicated. Although some of the richness present in the recorded version of "Ben's Song" was lost, McLachlan's hypnotic voice and emotion-laden lyrics brought out elements in the song that are lost in the highly polished recorded version. She also performed two songs that

she has written for her new album, and when she returned for her encore we were treated to Peter Gabriel's "Salisbury Hill" — a la McLachlan.

Despite minor problems with their sound system, McLachlan and the rest of her six person band performed a spectacular show and left much of the audience overwhelmed. During the hour-long performance, McLachlan showed that her performance this summer at the Folk Festival had given only the merest hint of her capabilities as a live performer. After the tour she will be adding to her collection of new songs and hopes to release a new album in April, surely one to be looked for.

After McLachlan's show, I found myself awaiting The Grapes of Wrath with considerably less enthusiasm than the rest of the audience, since I was less than impressed with their latest album. I was pleasantly surprised, however, because they put on a fairly decent show. The high points consisted mostly of the songs from *Treehouse*, their second album. "Backward Town" — about the narrow mindedness of their hometown, Kelowna — and "O Lucky Man" stood out especially for their characteristically upbeat, jangly Grapes sound. As the show wore on though, most of the songs that they performed started to run into each other and sound very much alike. They received a vigorous welcome from the audience, however, and were called back for an encore which included "All The Things I Wasn't," a song that stands out in my mind as the only memorable song from their recent album *Now and Again*.



Dragos Ruitu

We just couldn't bring ourselves to come up with one last horrible Grapes of Wrath pun.

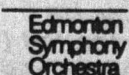


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