

ARTS



Photo by Martin Beates

If you didn't see the show or read the reviews, the news was that Taj Mahal did a magnificent show, and was enthusiastically received by a capacity SUB audience last Tuesday. Enthusiastic by Canadian standards, anyway (Taj had a few comments about the reticence of Canadian audiences; he said he preferred them to certain American kinds, however). His blues-styled music (including even blues-flavored C&W, if you can imagine that), and his easy-going jive-talk and anecdotes (for instance, about an impromptu performance with the Pointer Sisters aboard an airliner suffering a long schedule delay - which earned the airline praise for their "scheduled" performance) - all these things added up to a fine evening. If you missed him, shame on you! J.A.

Men at Work should go on welfare

Men at Work and Mental as Anything
Oct. 10
Northlands Coliseum

by Mark Roppel

Well there I was, your trusty reviewer, high atop the nose-bleed seats at the Coliseum contemplating the destiny of man in general and "why am I here?" in particular. It was 8:45 pm., half an hour since Mental as Anything had finished their one-song encore. (God knows why they bothered; I distinctly heard somebody tell his girlfriend to "shut up or they might come back".)

I had come under the impression that Mental was a high-energy rockabilly band, only to discover that down under rockabilly is played at half-speed and with all the conviction of a polar bear in hibernation. I mean these guys were bad, not one head bobbed nor did one foot stamp. In my humble opinion, a rockabilly band that can't bring the crowd to its feet might as well join a cult and go harvest peyote buds in the mountains of Brazil. *Ed. Note: (Do they have peyote buds in Brazil?)* Add to this a thoroughly disgusting sound system and you have the makings for a lousy concert.

By 8:50 the roadies were finished (someday I will have to write a book, "Roadies: the Missing Link", maybe it could even be my PhD or something) and Men at Work took the stage. "They had better be good", I thought to myself.

Well, someone should tell drummer Jerry Speiser when a new song starts so he could maybe change the beat just a little, and if I did not know better I would swear that John Rees learned to play bass from a matchbook cover, but Colin Hay is a good singer and Ron Stryker's guitar is at times quite interesting.

The Men began with some material from their new album, and if it was any indication, they are well on their way to becoming history. Finally the boys got around to playing their hits "Who Can it Be Now?" and "Down Under", but I sure did not sound anything like on the record. If I didn't know then, I know now that the men should only be put to work in the studio: they have all the stage presence of my pet cat. (My cat's name is Fuzz.)

At one point we — the paying public — were treated to a fifteen minute drum solo during which Hay and Greg Ham (the sax and keyboard player) hopped around pretending to be kangaroos. Some call this progressive rock; I call it indulgent and boring.

The highlight of the evening was when the Druids became involved in an altercation with some members of the audience, but alas no riot developed and by the second encore I was the only one left in my row. Clearly, it was time to leave.

At 10:30 I was safely on the LRT headed home.

Edmonton Symphony dazzles

review by Beth Jacob

The opening concert of the symphony's Master Series was held at the Jubilee Auditorium last Friday. From all indications it was an auspicious beginning to what could be an interesting year.

The concert opened with a routine rendition of Berlioz's "Roman Carnival Overture" which appeared even more bland in comparison with what followed.

Guest soloist Zoltan Kocsis was marvellous in Bartok's accessible "Piano Concerto No. 3". Although not a particularly showy piece, the work demands an excellent technique which Mr. Kocsis fully demonstrated. Especially good was the nicely articulated emotion and finely controlled tension between the piano and the woodwind section in the second movement. The orchestra sounded tentative and lacking in direction somewhat in the opening movement but recovered and managed to acquit itself well in the strongly rhythmic finale.

Mahler's "Symphony No. 1" comprised the

second half of the concert. Extra musicians had been hired, bringing the total to over eighty, to provide the necessary manpower for the work. Mayer made good use of his musicians, drawing strong, confident performances from his players.

My favorite movement was the wonderfully sarcastic third, with its lugubrious version of "Frere Jacques" and its mockery of a German oom pah band. Thankfully the extremes of mood were kept under restraint with smooth transitions from one to the other.

As for the finale, with twenty assorted percussion and brass players, with the rest of the orchestra going full tilt, how could they lose? Tempered by Mayer's secure direction, the orchestra managed to sound both coherent and impressive despite a few rough edges.

With the symphony in an enviable financial position (subscriptions are up again), one would hope they continue to use that security to tackle more demanding new repertoire. The success of Friday's concert should help considerably toward that end.

Ragtime radio reviewer raves

by Mark Roppel

Tuesday night while merrily spinning my radio dial I passed CKUA, and lo and behold they were playing ragtime — real ragtime! Not Marvin Hamlisch's bastardized versions, but original piano rolls of Scott Joplin, "Jelly Roll" Morton and the like. (The only thing more ridiculous than Marvin Hamlisch playing Scott Joplin would be Liona Boyd playing Chuck Berry.)

Naturally the show focused on Joplin, the god of ragtime. (Next to the Clash he's practically my favourite!). Unfortunately though, only excerpts are played, thus while there were three versions of "The Maple Leaf Rag", none of them was complete.

Nevertheless, I strongly urge everyone to tune in to the repeat broadcast Saturday at 4: it is a rare chance to hear great music as it was intended to be played.

*Forgive me, Father,
for I have sinned.
I have killed for my Country,
I have stolen for my Church,
I have loved a woman,
and I am a Priest.*

MONSIGNOR

Twentieth Century-Fox Presents
A FRANK YABLANS Presentation A FRANK PERRY Film
CHRISTOPHER REEVE in MONSIGNOR

starring
GENEVIEVE BUJOLD FERNANDO REY JASON MILLER JOE CORTESE ADOLFO CELI
with TOMAS MILIAN as Francisco Director of Photography BILLY WILLIAMS, B.S.C.
Music by JOHN WILLIAMS Produced by FRANK YABLANS and DAVID NIVEN, JR.
Screenplay by ABRAHAM POLONSKY and WENDELL MAYES
Based upon the novel by JACK ALAIN LEGER Directed by FRANK PERRY
Filmed in Moviemax

WORLD PREMIERE ENGAGEMENTS OCTOBER 22, 1982

**Check your local listings
for details**