

Talent In Action

MISSING PERSONS RAYBEATS

Beacon Theatre, New York
Admission: \$12.50

Is Missing Persons on its way to arena rock stardom? Judging from its SRO show at the Beacon Theatre Jan. 22, it may well be, though it could use a bit more material.

Missing Persons was formed in 1979 by a couple of alumni from Frank Zappa's band, and is fronted by Dale Bozzio, a former Playboy bunny who made the transition to music after marrying drummer/songwriter and band co-founder Terry Bozzio.

By now, as could be easily heard at the Beacon show, there is no denying Dale Bozzio's rock'n'roll credentials. She is an assured and confident singer and performer, and while there is no doubt that many in the audience came primarily to see her not inconsiderable physical attributes, Mrs. Bozzio's costumes and stage demeanor were in perfect tune with the bare-chested brand of power pop played by her band.

Missing Persons' music skillfully walks the thin boundary between what is expected of a new wave band and what rock traditionalists want from their favorites. The band plays snappy but melodic rock tunes, with the guitar up front, but usually no bass, and two keyboards creating a constant swirl in the background.

It's a heady brew, but it would be for nothing if there were not equally effective songs, and such tunes as "Words," "Mental Hopscootch," "Destination Unknown," "Walking In L.A." and "Windows," the latest single, were even stronger performed live than on the band's debut EP and its subsequent top 20 LP, "Spring Session M."

Missing Persons was originally supposed to play this date in November, but illness forced a rescheduling. For these makeup dates, it appeared that Missing Persons did not take their full gear with them. The show was played on stage with speaker cabinets draped with a white cloth, but there was very little by way of stage effects. Dale Bozzio, and to a lesser extent Terry Bozzio, pretty much carried the show.

They played for about an hour, and maybe that's all the material they have, but it didn't

seem enough. This reviewer, for one, rather wished that they would yank up the white drapes and show whatever surprise there would be underneath, and then go on with an even more electric and dynamic second half. Instead, they did a short encore and then piped in a Muzak version of their "Words" while the fans were leaving. That was pretty funny, but more live Missing Persons would have been much better.

They'll probably do a longer set after their next album, and more than likely the show will be at Madison Square Garden. It's only a matter of time from Missing Persons.

Opening the show were the Raybeats, a four-man all-instrumental group that plays contemporary surf music. Their set opened to a nearly empty house, and though the place filled up during their time onstage, the late arrivals did little to raise the level of enthusiasm for the Raybeats.

While the Raybeats had their pockets of supporters, and while there is little on which to fault their music, their basic post-Ventures rock'n'roll seemed somewhat one-dimensional and redundant. At a different time, in a different place, and before a different audience, this band could probably blister paint.

ROMAN KOZAK

JAMES BLOOD ULMER RONALD SHANNON JACKSON & THE DECODING SOCIETY

Bottom Line, New York
Admission: \$7.50

From his emergence as a solo artist a few years ago, there has been no doubt that guitarist James Blood Ulmer is an original. His blend of free jazz, funk and rock, in which jagged guitar lines soar over a churning backbeat, gave a new dimension to the idea of "fusion." But as his initial impact began to fade, questions about his concept began to present themselves: How much room for variety did it allow? How much further could he take it?

Ulmer's two albums for Columbia, as good as they are, did more to underline those questions



Billboard photo by Chuck Pulin
MISSING PERSON—Dale Bozzio of Missing Persons performs at the Beacon Theatre in New York.

than to answer them, and so did his Jan. 19 performance before a capacity audience here. The guitarist's hour-long set, consisting entirely of selections from his current LP, "Black Rock," had its share of exhilarating moments, and it indicated that Ulmer is looking for ways to expand his sound as well as his audience. But it also made one aware of his limitations.

Ulmer himself appears to be aware of his limitations as an improviser; he was extremely conservative in the amount of solo space he allowed himself, and on one number, the evocative "Moon Beam," he put his guitar away and did some creditable flute playing in tandem with guest artist David Murray's tenor saxophone. (Murray, a fiery and fearless player, was a welcome addition to the band.)

He also added some variety to his group sound by changing the instrumental coloration from tune to tune, sometimes using two drummers (Cornell Rochester and Grant Calvin Weston), sometimes bringing in Ronnie Drayton to play a biting, high-pitched second guitar part, and using Murray on several selections. And he dealt with his own limited range as a vocalist by using Irene Datcher for support on "Family Affair" and "Love Have Two Faces," two of the highlights of the set.

If questions about Ulmer's music linger, there can be none about the strength of his rhythm section. Rochester and Weston make a most stimulating drum team, and bassist Amin Ali's solid bottom kept things hopping no matter how far out they get on top.

Opening act Ronald Shannon Jackson & the Decoding Society mines a musical vein similar to Ulmer's, but with a very different texture (the group consists of trumpet, saxophone, guitar, two basses and Jackson's masterful drums), no vocals, and a greater compositional complexity. Saxophonist Zane Massey was the only consistently interesting soloist during the hour set, but the ensemble playing and Jackson's compositions were both exceptional.

PETER KEEPNEWS

Boxscore

Survey For Week Ending 2/5/83

The following are among the top concert grosses nationwide reported through the survey week. Included are act(s), gross, attendance, capacity of facility, ticket prices, promoter, facility, city, number of shows, number of sellouts and dates(s).

- ALABAMA, JANIE FRICKE—\$268,400, 23,300, \$12.75 & \$10.75, Keith Fowler Promotions, Rupp Arena, Lexington, Ky., sellout, Jan. 22.
- BARRY MANILOW—\$245,218, 16,956, \$15.10 & \$13.10, Contemporary Presentations/Pace Concerts, Summit, Houston, sellout, Jan. 13.
- BARRY MANILOW—\$226,723, 15,241 (18,000 capacity), \$15 & \$12.50, Feyline Presents, McNichols Arena, Denver, Jan. 23.
- KENNY ROGERS, CRYSTAL GAYLE, LONNIE SHORR—\$216,565, 14,944, \$15 & \$12.50, C.K. Spurlock, Univ. of N.M. Special Events Center, Albuquerque, sellout, state concert gross record, Jan. 18.
- WILLIE NELSON & FAMILY—\$171,649, 12,946 (14,000), \$13.50 & \$11.50, Feyline Presents/Fahn & Silva Presents, San Diego Sports Arena, Jan. 17.
- ALABAMA, JANIE FRICKE—\$155,787, 12,463, \$12.50, Keith Fowler Promotions, Roberts Municipal Stadium, Evansville, Ind., sellout, Jan. 23.
- AEROSMITH, PAT TRAVERS—\$139,445 (Canadian), 10,925 (12,199), \$13.50 & \$12.50, Perryscope Concerts, Pacific Coliseum, Vancouver, B.C., Jan. 21.
- CHARLIE DANIELS BAND, JAMES BROWN, WOODY HERMAN, LARRY GATLIN & THE GATLIN BROTHERS BAND, QUARTERFLASH, ROY ACUFF, CARL PERKINS, JOHNNY LEE, DR. HOOK, TANYA TUCKER, GRINDERSWITCH, WINTERS BROTHERS, PAPA JOHN CREACH, BOXCAR WILLIE, RICHIE CANNATA, MELVIN SLOAN DANCERS, STEVE WALSH & STREETS, MCGUFFY LANE, DOBIE GRAY, KELLY HARLAND, DICKEY BETTS, JIMMY HALL, CHUCK LEAVELL, BUTCH TRUCKS—\$135,000, 9,000, \$15, Cumberland Concerts, Municipal Auditorium, Nashville, "Volunteer Jam IX," sellout, Jan. 22.
- BETTE MIDLER—\$128,895, 6,733, \$20 & \$17.50, Pace Concerts, Music Hall Fair Park, Dallas, two sellouts, Jan. 23-24.
- BARRY MANILOW—\$115,740, 7,860, \$15, Contemporary Presentations, Persins Auditorium, Lincoln, Neb., sellout, Jan. 22.
- NEIL YOUNG—\$112,230, 9,196 (10,218), \$12.50 & \$11.50, Evening Star Prods., Ariz. State Univ. Activity Center, Tempe, Jan. 18.
- KISS, NIGHT RANGER—\$94,652, 10,147 (11,000), \$9.50 & \$8.50, Frank J. Russo, Centrum, Worcester, Mass., Jan. 22.
- ALABAMA, JANIE FRICKE—\$91,600, 7,680 (10,000), \$12.50, Keith Fowler Promotions Ind. State Univ. Hulman Center, Terre Haute, Jan. 21.
- TOM PETTY & THE HEARTBREAKERS—\$91,199, 8,397 (19,200), \$11.50 & \$10.50, Evening Star Prods., Coliseum, Phoenix, Jan. 22.
- OAK RIDGE BOYS, SUE POWELL—\$90,225, 7,925 (8,658), \$11.50 & \$9.75, Stardate Prods., Dane County Coliseum, Madison, Wis., Jan. 23.
- PHIL COLLINS—\$82,162, 5,850, \$15 & \$12.50, Pace Concerts, Music Hall, Houston, two sellouts, Jan. 22-23.
- JUDAS PRIEST, HEAVEN—\$76,890, 8,357 (10,000), \$10 & \$9, Stardate Prods., Dane County Coliseum, Madison, Wis., Jan. 22.
- CONWAY TWITTY, RONNIE McDOWELL—\$74,470, 7,694 (9,686), \$10, United Prods., Memorial Auditorium, Chattanooga, Tenn., two shows, Jan. 23.
- TOM PETTY & THE HEARTBREAKERS—\$71,339, 7,054 (9,713), \$10.50 & \$8.50, Evening Star Prods., Tucson (Ariz.) Community Center, Jan. 23.
- CONWAY TWITTY, EARL THOMAS CONLEY—\$69,190, 7,298 (8,738), \$10, United Prods., Von Braun Civic Center, Huntsville, Ala., Jan. 22.
- NEIL YOUNG—\$63,477, 4,700, \$13.50, Avalon Attractions, Events Center, Univ. of Calif. at Santa Barbara, sellout, Jan. 20.
- NEIL YOUNG—\$61,887, 3,700, \$17.50 & \$14.50, Avalon Attractions/Marc Berman Presents, Golden Hall, San Diego, sellout, Jan. 21.
- TOM PETTY & THE HEARTBREAKERS, NICK LOWE, PAUL CARRACK—\$56,808, 5,868 (6,229), \$10 & \$9, Stone City Attractions, Univ. of Texas Special Events Center, El Paso, Jan. 24.
- WAYLON JENNINGS, JESSIE COLTER, SONNY CURTIS & THE ORIGINAL CRICKETS—\$55,707, 5,419 (7,000), \$10.75, DiCesare Ensler Prods., Stanley Theater, Pittsburgh, two shows, Jan. 21.
- KISS, NIGHT RANGER—\$45,549, 4,338 (4,500), \$10.50, Tony Ruffino-Larry Vaughn Prods., Cumberland County Civic Center, Portland, Maine, Jan. 21.
- MERLE HAGGARD, LEONA WILLIAMS—\$37,770, 3,960 (4,054), \$10, Bash Prods., Ozark (Ala.) Civic Center, Jan. 15.
- PHIL COLLINS—\$36,943, 2,619 (3,054), \$15 & \$13.50, Pace Concerts, Tarrant County Convention Center, Ft. Worth, Jan. 24.
- CONWAY TWITTY, EARL THOMAS CONLEY—\$36,280, 3,844 (5,225), \$10, United Prods., Municipal Auditorium, Columbus, Ga., Jan. 21.
- COUNT BASIE—\$32,130, 2,352 (\$2,416), \$15, Jack Hooke for Straw Bass Presents, Berkley Performing Arts Center, Boston, two shows, Dec. 31.
- MISSING PERSONS, RAYBEATS—\$29,660, 2,619, \$12.50 & \$10.50, Monarch Entertainment Bureau, Beacon Theater, New York City, sellout, Jan. 22.
- PSYCHEDELIC FURS, HOLLY & THE ITALIANS—\$22,000, 2,000, \$11, IMP/Seth Hurwitz, Warner Theatre, Washington, D.C., sellout, Jan. 21.
- TINA TURNER, JUNIOR CLINE, THE RECLINERS—\$17,861, 1,541 (2,000), \$12.50 & \$10.50, in-house promotion, Wax Museum, Washington, D.C., two shows, Jan. 20.
- WALL OF VOO DOO, LOS LOBOS—\$14,641, 1,393, \$10.75, West Coast Concerts/Beach Club/in-house promotion, Beverly Theatre, Los Angeles, sellout, Jan. 22.
- MISSING PERSONS, NIGHTCAPS—\$14,562, 1,433 (3,347), Monarch Entertainment Bureau, Capitol Theatre, Passaic, N.J., Jan. 21.
- PSYCHEDELIC FURS, OUR DAUGHTER'S WEDDING, RICHARD LLOYD PROJECT—\$12,764, 1,302 (3,347), \$10.50 & \$9.50, Monarch Entertainment Bureau, Capitol Theatre, Passaic, N.J., Jan. 22.
- ROBERT HAZARD, SCANDAL—\$11,069, 2,093 (2,500), \$5.95 & \$4.95, Electric Factory Concerts, Castle Garden, Dorney Park, Pa., Jan. 21.
- BOW WOW WOW, BUSH TETRAS—\$10,824, 984 (1,100), \$11, IMP/Seth Hurwitz, Ontario Theatre, Washington, D.C., Dec. 29.
- THREE DOG NIGHT—\$10,625, 850, \$12.50, in-house promotion, Le Club, St. Petersburg, Fla., two sellouts, Jan. 1.
- ROBERT HAZARD, SCANDAL—\$8,239, 1,487 (1,500), \$6.50 & \$5, Electric Factory Concerts, Brandywine Club, Chadds Ford, Pa., Jan. 22.

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