

## Talent In Action

## CHAKA KHAN

*Carnegie Hall, New York*  
*Tickets: \$15, \$17.50*

Despite an erratic sound system that occasionally threatened to smother her in the mix, and despite a band that displayed a disconcerting tendency to slip in and out of the groove, Chaka Khan managed to charm a capacity crowd here Jan. 21 with a strong, mostly uptempo show.

There probably isn't anyone in black pop music today, with the exception of Aretha Franklin, who can scream on key any better than Khan. She had ample opportunity to let loose with her distinctive brand of euphonious shouting throughout the 90-minute, 17-song concert, beginning with her impressive opening number, "I Know You, I Love You," and finishing with the inevitable encore, her oddly megalomaniacal but undeniably infectious smash hit of a few years back, "I'm Every Woman."

Between the screams, Khan, who was in good spirits and almost constant motion all evening, left herself plenty of room for some powerful vocalizing of a more restrained nature. Her supple voice might have been better showcased had she performed more ballads (although curiously, one of the few ballads she did do, her current Warner Bros. single "Got To Be There," came out rather strident and was not the emotional blockbuster it could have been). But it was certainly well showcased in the midtempo and uptempo tunes that dominated the show, notably "What Cha' Gonna Do For Me," "We Can Work It Out," "Hot Butterfly," and a well-paced medley of selections from Khan's tenure as the lead singer with Rufus.

If Khan was at her best on the funkier numbers, she was at less than her best on her only attempt at out-and-out jazz singing, "Take The 'A' Train." As versatile a voice as she has, she has not yet developed the sense of phrasing or of pitch that a first-rate jazz singer needs.

Khan's six-piece backing group, which was augmented by two female singers, did not always play with the degree of sharpness and tightness that her music calls for. But it did have the benefit of Randy Brecker on trumpet and Michael Brecker on tenor saxophone to provide some crucial punch, and keyboardist Lesette Wilson made a few welcome instrumental contributions as well.

PETER KEEPNEWS

## RANK AND FILE

*Music Machine, Los Angeles*  
*Admission: \$6.50*

There's so much hype and bluster about the L.A. scene that it's tempting to write off each "next big thing" as the work of the local chamber of commerce. However, Rank and File—a

four-piece band originally based in the musical hotbed of Austin, Tex.—reaffirms the belief that true talent will rise to the top. Though the group's debut album, "Sundown" on Slash, is tepid, the performance at this packed 500-capacity club Jan. 19 was a powerful reminder of what popular music at its best can be.

What makes Rank and File special is its merging of traditional country, complete with working class sentiments, with the spirit and bravado of punk. In fact, lead singer/guitarist Chip Kinman, singer/bassist Tony Kinman, guitarist/vocalist Alejandro Escovedo and drummer Slim Evans played in such California punk bands as the Diis and the Nuns. Though the group can play sweet country with the best of them, as evidenced on the traditional "Wabash Cannonball" and "Ring Of Fire" or their own "Amanda Ruth," Rank and File really hit its stride in the hour set on the backwoods funk of "The Conductor Wore Black," "Coyote" and "Hotwind." The music is enhanced by Chip Kinman's energetic, guitar-slashing stage demeanor, which definitely owes more to rock than country.

The problem with Rank and File (aside from the lack of a strong vocalist) is that it may be too country for rock fans and too rock for country fans. The cynical may even dismiss them as just another trendy flash-in-the-pan. However, once seen on stage, it's hard to believe that these urban cowboys could be forced by public apathy to ride into the sunset.

CARY DARLING



Billboard photo by Chuck Pulin  
**TINA'S TRIUMPH—Tina Turner shows her classic form during a three-day stint at the Ritz in New York.**

## KAMAHL

*Monarch Room, Royal Hawaiian Hotel, Hawaii*  
*Admission: \$17.50*

Despite his enormous popularity in Australia and some limited exposure in Las Vegas and on American tv, Kamahl has yet to crack this market.

His three-month stint (which ends March 19) at one of Waikiki's most prestigious rooms would lead one to believe that he is using the 50th state as a starting point for American recognition. His one-hour, 18-song performance makes it clear why he's so successful in places other than America, and what kinds of problems he will encounter with audiences in this country.

Visually and musically, Kamahl is a no-gimmick, no-frills performer. Using a seemingly flawless sound system and a tight, lean, six-piece backup band, he keeps the focus of the show on himself and his strong basso vocals.

His material leaves much to be desired. Most of the tunes he did were standards arranged simply and in a relatively quickly-paced manner. The only songs on which he was able to showcase his well-controlled voice were "Ol' Man River" and "Sleeping Beauty," and the latter was more acting than singing. The other songs, including "I Gotta Be Me," "Always On My Mind," "Liza Jane," an awful version of "Chariots Of Fire" by his band, "The Impossible Dream," "Amen," "My Way," and "Hava Nagila" seemed to be rushed and devoid of inspiration.

His between-songs chatter was so benign as to seem irritating after a while, and although Kamahl's shows was delivered in a proper, inoffensive, polished, precise, calculated, restrained way, he's going to have to change his material, his arrangements, and his general performing style to fit an over-stimulated American audience if he hopes to generate any real popularity in this country.

DON WELLER

**PLANET PATROL  
 MADONNA  
 MAN PARRISH  
 THE BEAT BOYS**

*The Red Parrot, New York*  
*Admission: \$10*

Disco by any other name ("dance music") is still disco to this reviewer, and, according to the reaction at this Jan. 26 show, it's still alive and well. In fact, as played by the four groups performing at the Red Parrot's Wednesday night showcase, disco music is peppier and funkier than ever.

Opening act Man Parrish arrived onstage wearing a suit that made him look like a cross between Darth Vader and the Elephant Man, complete with fog. He, along with the aid of a Vocoder and two equally bizarrely clad backup singers, provided the most dramatic note of the evening.

Next up were the Beat Boys, a duo who performed one song, "Bebop," and seemed to have quite a bit of fun doing it. They were followed by Tommy Boy recording artists Planet Patrol—five young men in gold lame singing, among other things, "Play At Your Own Risk."

It was this act, in fact, that had the most heart, although their choreography could use a little work. The five had difficulty moving around the stage without bumping into each other.

Finally, Madonna took the stage. The one-woman act (what else, with a name like that?) was accompanied by three backup dancers and provided a segment more interesting visually than musically.

All groups performed to taped music, leaving little room for spontaneity, but allowing for less time between acts. Still, the strong visual attributes of all performers for the most part made up for the lack of live music. And the Red Parrot, with its expansive dance floor, turned out to be the ideal venue for the evening, since dancing was de rigueur.

LAURA FOTI

## For The Record

Leon McKnabb was the previous sole owner of the Music Machine club here, not Hal Glickman as stated in a Feb. 5 Billboard article. McKnabb, Glickman, Gary Fontenot and Michel Myer are partners in the club's operation.

## Boxscore

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).

- **BARRY MANILOW—\$189,190, 13,833, \$15, \$12.50 & \$10**, Contemporary Presentations/Pace Concerts, Tarrant County Convention Center, Ft. Worth, sellout, Jan. 28.
- **BETTE MIDLER—\$180,140, 10,666, \$17.50 & \$15**, Pace Concerts, Summit, Houston, sellout, Jan. 26.
- **TOM PETTY & THE HEARTBREAKERS—\$155,193, 13,728 (19,000)**, \$11.50-\$10.50, Stone City Attractions, Reunion Arena, Dallas, Jan. 30.
- **AEROSMITH, PAT TRAVERS—\$154,211, 14,823 (16,777)**, \$10.75-\$9.75, Jam Productions, Met Center, Minneapolis, Jan. 28.
- **BARRY MANILOW—\$126,485, 9,534, \$15 & \$12.50**, Jam Prods., Hammons Center, Springfield, Mo., sellout, house gross & house attendance records, Jan. 19.
- **BARBARA MANDRELL, STEVE WARINER—\$124,714, 11,929 (13,307)**, \$11 & \$9, in-house promotion/produced by Varnell Enterprises, Univ. of Texas Frank Erwin Center, Austin, Jan. 22.
- **OAK RIDGE BOYS—\$120,000, 3,200**, \$37.50, in-house promotion, Carlton West Dinner Theatre, Green Bay, Wis., four sellouts, Jan. 22-23.
- **BARRY MANILOW—\$119,820, 8,118, \$15**, Jam Prods., Five Seasons Center, Cedar Rapids, Iowa, sellout, house gross & house attendance records, Jan. 20.
- **NEIL YOUNG—\$119,059, 10,532, \$11.50**, Contemporary Prods., Kiel Auditorium, St. Louis, sellout, Jan. 30.
- **REO SPEEDWAGON, RED RIDER—\$116,894, 10,731 (13,000)**, \$11.25 & \$10.25, Sunshine Promotions, Rupp Arena, Lexington, Ky., Jan. 29.
- **BARRY MANILOW—\$116,315, 7,977, \$15 & \$12.50**, Contemporary Presentations/New West Presentations, Bicentennial Center, Salina, Kan., sellout, Jan. 25.
- **ALABAMA, JANIE FRICKE—\$116,035, 9,282, \$12.50**, Keith Fowler Prods., Macon (Ga.) Coliseum, Jan. 28.
- **ALABAMA, JANIE FRICKE—\$111,987, 8,959 (12,000)**, \$12.50, Keith Fowler Prods., O'Connell Center, Univ. of Fla., Gainesville, Jan. 29.
- **ALABAMA, JANIE FRICKE—\$101,700, 8,136, \$12.50**, Keith Fowler Prods., Lakeland (Fla.) Civic Center, Jan. 30.
- **REO SPEEDWAGON, RED RIDER—\$93,978, 8,393 (10,000)**, \$11.50 & \$10.50, Sunshine Promotions, Cincinnati Gardens, Jan. 28.
- **CONWAY TWITTY, RONNIE McDOWELL—\$90,390, 9,445 (13,662)**, \$10, United Productions, Louisville (Ky.) Gardens, two shows, Jan. 29.
- **OAK RIDGE BOYS, SUE POWELL—\$90,225, 7,925 (8,658)**, \$11.50 & \$9.75, Herb Frank Prods., Dane County Coliseum, Madison, Wis., Jan. 23.
- **BILLY SQUIER, SAGA—\$87,832, 8,569 (8,600)**, \$10.25, Silver Star Prods., Bayfront Center, St. Petersburg, Fla., Jan. 30.
- **AEROSMITH, PAT TRAVERS—\$79,845, 8,050, \$10**, Stone City Attractions, El Paso (Texas) Coliseum, sellout, Jan. 26.
- **JUDAS PRIEST, HEAVEN—\$59,590, 5,959 (7,169)**, \$10, Brass Ring Prods., Wendler Arena, Saginaw, Mich., Jan. 25.
- **CONWAY TWITTY, RONNIE McDOWELL—\$58,378, 6,481 (8,458)**, \$10-\$9, United Productions, Rupp Arena, Lexington, Ky., Jan. 28.
- **JUDAS PRIEST, HEAVEN—\$54,109, 4,919, \$11**, Brass Ring Prods., Lansing (Mich.) Civic Center, sellout, Jan. 24.
- **JUDAS PRIEST, HEAVEN—\$50,940, 5,094 (7,112)**, \$10, Brass Ring Prods., L.C. Walker Arena, Muskegon, Mich., Jan. 26.
- **PHIL COLLINS—\$43,052, 3,093 (3,457)**, \$13.50-\$12.50, Jam Productions, Braden Auditorium, Normal, Ill., Jan. 28.
- **PHIL COLLINS—\$41,722, 3,760, \$11.50**, Jam Prods., Ind. Univ. Auditorium, Bloomington, sellout, Jan. 29.
- **ADAM ANT, SCANDAL—\$41,297, 3,933, \$10.50**, Concert Promotions/Southern Promotions, Fox Theatre, Atlanta, sellout, Jan. 29.
- **CHAKA KHAN, HARRY RAY—\$38,320, 2,825, \$15, \$12.50 & \$10**, Electric Factory Concerts/East Coast Concerts, Academy of Music, Philadelphia, sellout, Jan. 30.
- **ROSEMARY CLOONEY, TED COLLINS—\$36,180, 3,015, \$12**, Keith Acles Prods./KLIV-Radio, Bold Knight Celebrity Showroom, Sunnyville, Calif., four sellouts, Jan. 23-24.
- **ADAM ANT, SCANDAL—\$33,627, 3,490 (4,000)**, \$9.75, Fantasma Prods., Tampa (Fla.) Jai Alai, Jan. 27.
- **PHIL COLLINS—\$31,260, 2,738, \$12**, Contemporary Presentations, Old Lady Of Brady, Tulsa, sellout, Jan. 25.
- **BILLY SQUIER, SAGA—\$30,410, 3,119 (4,000)**, \$9.75, Silver Star Prods., Savannah (Ga.) Civic Center, Jan. 25.
- **CHAKA KHAN, STREET CORNER SYMPHONY—\$28,000, 2,000, \$14**, in-house promotion, Wax Museum, Washington, D.C., two sellouts, Jan. 24-25.
- **MILES DAVIS—\$26,424, 2,320 (2,900)**, \$12 & \$11, Feyline Presents, Rainbow Music Hall, Denver, two shows, Jan. 29.
- **FRANK MARINO & MAHOGANY RUSH—\$25,447, 2,530 (3,500)**, \$10.75 & \$9.75, Avalon Attractions, Santa Monica (Calif.) Civic Center, Jan. 28.
- **PSYCHEDELIC FURS—\$11,700, 1,300, \$9**, Brass Ring Prods., Agora Ballroom, Atlanta, sellout, Jan. 19.
- **JOHNNY WINTER, THE WEBB—\$8,625, 750, \$11.50**, Jam Prods., Park West, Chicago, sellout, Jan. 28.
- **HUEY LEWIS & THE NEWS—\$4,811, 880, \$6 & \$5**, Feyline Presents, Boulder (Colo.) Theatre, sellout, Jan. 29.
- **DICKIE BETTS, BUTCH TRUCKS, CHUCK LEAVELL, JIMMY HALL, BOB MARGOLIN—\$8,500, 1,000, \$8.50**, in-house, Wax Museum, Washington, D.C., sellout, Jan. 26.
- **ASLEEP AT THE WHEEL, THUNDER ROAD—\$3,600, 600, \$6**, Jimka Productions, Michaels Night Club, Virginia Beach, Va., sellout, Jan. 31.

Copyrighted and compiled by Amusement Business, a Billboard Publications, Inc. publication. Boxscores are compiled every Tuesday. If you wish to file your concert report, please call Patricia Bates in Nashville at 615/748-8120; Ancil Davis in New York at 212/764-7314; or Hedy Weisbart in Los Angeles at 213/273-7040.



Give the gift of music.

## Australia, Japan, B'way On Manilow's Itinerary

• Continued from page 35

and light companies, and the increased cohesiveness of a crew that has worked together for several years.

Joyce is the bottom-line man in the Manilow organization. His back-

ground is in banking and financial management; he says he had no real concert experience before joining Manilow's team. "I was originally hired as the tour accountant," he says. "I was just supposed to worry about the numbers; the rest of the headaches came later."

It's Joyce's responsibility to make sure the shows turn a profit, something he says they do even before adding in concessions and merchandising. "We establish a budget and really stick with it and take a great deal of pride in coming in under it," he says, "though I have to admit it gets tougher and tougher each year."

The current tour, which began last October in Ogden, Utah, is mainly of secondary markets, which, Joyce notes, "don't get the big, professional shows on as consistent a basis" as the major urban centers.

"But we looked at all the factors. The economy is of course a prime factor for everyone going out, but it wasn't the sole basis for our rationale. We mainly wanted to go to places we haven't been in more than two years, and most of those turned out to be secondary markets."



reunion arena

19,200 SEATS

777 Sports St. • Dallas, TX 75207  
 (214) 658-7070