

TALENT IN ACTION

LYLE LOVETT
MARY CHAPIN CARPENTER
The Bottom Line, New York

COUNTRY SINGER/songwriter Lyle Lovett, whose second MCA/Curb album, "Pontiac," has heightened the acclaim generated by his self-titled debut, brought along His Large Band to this March 14 showcase, which drew a heavy press and industry turnout. At times, Lovett's backing unit included three horns, piano, stand-up bass, sit-down fiddle and cello, and a female blues vocalist in a traditional guitar/drums country format. Thus, he was able to reproduce live some of the most eclectic recorded country music this side of Merle Haggard.

But with so much variety (practically every pop style from the country swing of "Cowboy Man," which opened the set, to the bluesy "M-O-N-E-Y," which closed it), it was hard to get a proper handle on the versatile artist until the middle of the show, when he stripped down to the essentials. Here, tunes like the quietly lovely "Waltzing Fool" from his first album and the sorrowful title track from his new album were set off by sparser arrangements, graced mainly by soft cello parts and background bass and piano.

The brassier material went over just as well though, as did Lovett's keenly ironic humor (he admitted suffering seasickness while introducing "If I Had A Boat"). However, his encore, "Stand By Your Man," shouldn't have gotten the laughs it did, since it was beautifully sung with tongue out of cheek.

Mary Chapin Carpenter filled out her opening half of this "young country" bill perfectly. The Columbia artist's simple and straightforward delivery was a refreshing change from showier country vocalists, and her guitars-and-piano band gave her "Hometown Girl" debut-album material some much-needed strengthening.

JERRY HARRISON: CASUAL GODS
Club Bene, Sayreville, N.J.

THE NAME OF the band is not Talking Heads. But Jerry Harrison's roots definitely show.

Harrison's Casual Gods solo project was a funk machine at Club Bene on March 16, a syncopated brew of electronic beats with hints of Third World music; in short, the sound was pretty similar to that of the percussive side of his home band, Talking Heads.

Most of the material may not be targeted for commercial radio, but Harrison, the Talking Heads keyboardist/guitarist, can adapt to popular taste, as witnessed by the crowd reaction to his album rock hit "Rev It Up."

Accompanied by a four-piece rhythm section (which included Talking Heads sideman Bernie Worrell on keyboards) and two female backup singers, Harrison alternated between keyboards and guitar, his stage presence somewhat stiff and taciturn for most of the night. However, his gyrating backup band did more than enough dancing to keep the stage action flowing.

Harrison's music is an invitation to dance, heavy on the good-foot sound of booming bass and drums. The electronic riffing was broken by occasional excursions outside the beat, as on "Let It Come Down," highlighted by a hymnlike chorus, and on the smooth synthesizer break in "Song Of Angels."

The aforementioned "Rev It Up," arguably Harrison's most melodic and accessible song, was the crowd favorite. The Casual Gods band kicked the laid-back feel of the recording into high gear, turning the song into a rave-up featuring several extended solos.

Changing gears on the encore, Harrison brought out "She Cracked" from his Modern Lovers days, a neat switch from funk to straight rock that neatly closed the night.

BRUCE HARING

SILOS

The Music Machine, Los Angeles

THE NEW YORK-BASED SILOS, 1987's darlings of the alternative music set, played a frequently loud but galvanizing show at the last of their L.A.-area dates, drawing cheers from a two-thirds-full house of the curious (including several label a&r reps) and the cultish.

The quartet's live sound is radically different from that heard on its much-praised Record Collect albums, which rely heavily on the folkish textures of now-departed violinist Mary Rowell. On stage, the Silos come out blasting, with guitarists Walter Salas-Humara and Bob Rupe raising gusts of six-string noise. (In fact, the volume was so high at times that the club's soundman struggled to assemble a clean mix, to little avail.)

The high-impact presentation took nothing away from the home-spun rockers heard on the albums "About Her Steps" and "Cuba." In particular, the charming "Mary's Getting Married" and the walloping "Get Back My Name" (from the recent "Tennessee Fire" EP) crackled with fresh energy. The group brought the temperature down with the semiacoustic "Margaret" and showed unexpected wit on "Porqué No?" ("Why Not?"), sung in Spanish by Salas-Humara.

The formal set crashed to a close with a pounding extended version of "Tennessee Fire" that made comparisons between the Silos and the Velvet Underground seem perfectly sensible.

Although physically unprepossessing on stage, the Silos stir up enough wattage to set them apart from the current crop of college radio faves. They bear close watching.

CHRIS MORRIS



BOXSCORE TOP CONCERT GROSSES

ARTIST(S)	Venue	Date(s)	Gross Ticket Price(s)	Attendance Capacity	Promoter
MICHAEL JACKSON	McNichols Arena Denver, Colo.	March 24-26	\$842,918 \$22.50	40,251 sellout	Fey Concert Co.
BRUCE SPRINGSTEEN & THE E STREET BAND	The Omni Atlanta, Ga.	March 22-23	\$741,218 \$22.50	32,944 sellout	Concert Promotions/Southern Promotions
STING	The Forum Inglewood, Calif.	March 20-21	\$574,610 \$18.50	32,000 sellout	Pacificconcerts Parc Presentations
FRANK SINATRA/SAMMY DAVIS JR.	Met Center Bloomington, Minn.	March 22	\$469,490 \$40/\$30	12,564 17,000	Rose Prods.
BRUCE SPRINGSTEEN & THE E STREET BAND	Pittsburgh Civic Arena Pittsburgh, Pa.	March 20	\$381,802 \$22.50	16,969 sellout	DiCesare-Engler Prods.
BARRY MANILOW	Las Vegas Hilton Las Vegas, Nev.	March 15-20	\$340,235 \$40/\$35	9,407 11,200	in-house
GRATEFUL DEAD	The Omni Atlanta, Ga.	March 24	\$267,430 \$17.50	16,201 sellout	Concert Promotions/Southern Promotions Monarch Entertainment Bureau
DAVID COPPERFIELD	Riverside Theatre Milwaukee, Wis.	March 17-20	\$246,082 \$19.75/\$15.75/\$14.75/\$9.75	14,070 sellout	Joseph Entertainment Group
JOHN COUGAR MELLENCAMP	San Diego Sports Arena San Diego, Calif.	Feb. 27	\$234,562 \$18.50	12,679 sellout	Bill Silva Presents
DIONNE WARWICK BURT BACHARACH	Fox Theatre St. Louis, Mo.	March 18-20	\$211,402 \$22.90/\$19.90/ \$16.90/\$10.90	11,225 12,897	Fox Concerts Steve Litman Prods.
STING	San Diego Sports Arena San Diego, Calif.	March 22	\$210,734 \$18.50	11,391 sellout	Bill Silva Presents
INXS PIL	Cobo Arena Detroit, Mich.	March 16	\$208,408 \$17.50	11,909 sellout	Brass Ring Prods.
WHITESNAKE GREAT WHITE	Frank Erwin Center Univ. of Texas, Austin Austin, Texas	March 18	\$203,553 \$17/\$15	12,703 sellout	PACE Concerts in-house
FRANK ZAPPA HOT TUNA	Nassau Veterans Memorial Coliseum Uniondale, N.Y.	March 25	\$200,150 \$18.50/\$17.50	11,000 14,000	Ron Delsner Enterprises
GEORGE STRAIT K.T. OSLIN	Tingley Coliseum New Mexico State Fair Albuquerque, N.M.	March 19	\$197,220 \$18	11,057 sellout	ACTS Varnell Enterprises
BARRY MANILOW	Fisher Theatre Detroit, Mich.	March 8-10	\$196,090 \$40/\$15	18,012 sellout	Nederlander Organization
AEROSMITH WHITE LION	Charlotte Coliseum Charlotte, N.C.	March 25	\$186,351 \$16.50	11,294 11,900	Cellar Door Prods.
INXS PIL	Centrum in Worcester Worcester, Mass.	March 21	\$182,943 \$16.50/\$15.50	11,388 sellout	Don Law Co.
GEORGE STRAIT K.T. OSLIN	Pan American Center New Mexico State Univ. Las Cruces, N.M.	March 18	\$162,350 \$16.50	9,750 sellout	Varnell Enterprises
WHITESNAKE GREAT WHITE	Lubbock Municipal Coliseum Lubbock, Texas	March 19	\$160,890 \$15.50	10,380 sellout	Stardate Concerts PACE Concerts
RANDY TRAVIS/CONWAY TWITTY	Mississippi Coast Coliseum & Convention Center Biloxi, Miss.	March 26	\$150,662 \$16.50	9,131 11,000	Special Moments Promotions Jayson Promotions
CONWAY TWITTY/GEORGE JONES	Franklin County Veterans Memorial Auditorium Columbus, Ohio	March 19	\$123,800 \$16.50	7,790 sellout	Jayson Promotions
RANDY TRAVIS/CONWAY TWITTY	Thibodaux Civic Center Thibodaux, La.	March 27	\$123,437 \$16.50	7,481 sellout	Special Moments Promotions Jayson Promotions
WHITESNAKE GREAT WHITE	Sun Dome Univ. of South Florida Tampa, Fla.	March 24	\$121,968 \$16.50	7,720 7,969	American Concerts Magic Prods.
ECHO & THE BUNNYMEN SCREAMING BLUE MESSIAHS	Open Air Theatre San Diego State Univ. San Diego, Calif.	March 25-26	\$106,700 \$18.50/\$16.50/\$14.50	6,725 8,354	Avalon Attractions
INXS PIL	Patriot Center George Mason Univ. Fairfax, Va.	March 24	\$102,937 \$17.50	5,896 sellout	Cellar Door Prods.
AEROSMITH WHITE LION	Greensboro Coliseum Complex Greensboro, N.C.	March 23	\$101,030 \$16.50	6,534 10,438	Cellar Door Prods.
KENNY ROGERS FORESTER SISTERS EXILE	Greensboro Coliseum Complex Greensboro, N.C.	March 25	\$97,581 \$16.50	6,276 12,000	North American Tours
RANDY TRAVIS/CONWAY TWITTY	Monroe Civic Center Monroe, La.	March 25	\$94,694 \$16.50	5,739 7,500	Special Moments Promotions Jayson Promotions
INXS PIL	Stabler Arena Lehigh Univ. Bethlehem, Pa.	March 23	\$85,776 \$16	5,325 sellout	Makoul Prods.
THE SUPERCONSCIOUS WORLD OF REVEEN	Northern Alberta Jubilee Auditorium Edmonton, Alberta	March 7-10	\$84,165 \$15.50/\$13.50/\$9.50	6,901 10,212	Al Johnson
DAVID SYLVIAN	Massey Hall Toronto, Ontario	March 25-26	\$74,744 \$20.50	4,512 4,800	Concert Prods. International
STING	Riverside Theatre Milwaukee, Wis.	March 1	\$73,929 \$29.75	2,519 sellout	Joseph Entertainment Group
GEORGE THOROGOOD & THE DESTROYERS	Fox Theatre Atlanta, Ga.	March 22	\$70,730 \$14.75/\$13.75	4,678 sellout	Chesapeake Concerts
KISS ANTHRAX	Memorial Coliseum Complex Portland, Ore.	March 14	\$65,835 \$16.50	4,107 9,000	Media One
ENGBERT HUMPERDINCK PAM MADISON	Mid-Hudson Civic Center Poughkeepsie, N.Y.	March 15	\$52,342 \$21/\$19	2,560 3,000	Magic City Prods.
THE SUPERCONSCIOUS WORLD OF REVEEN	Saskatoon Centennial Auditorium & Convention Center Saskatoon, Saskatchewan	March 11-13	\$41,188 \$15.50/\$13/\$10.50	3,494 5,545	Al Johnson
JOHN PRINE/BONNIE RAITT	Celebrity Theatre Phoenix, Ariz.	March 24	\$37,840 \$16	2,365 2701	Evening Star Prods.

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