

TALENT IN ACTION

ARETHA FRANKLIN
Radio City Music Hall
New York, N.Y.

IN HER FIRST Gotham appearance in eight years, Aretha Franklin left audiences in no doubt that she still deserves that oft-used tag, "Queen of Soul." Looking fresh and radiant, Franklin arrived on stage at this Radio City Music Hall show June 6 in a pink Cadillac, a nod to her 1985 smash single, "Freeway Of Love."

Backed by a full rhythm section, orchestra, and five background vocalists, the singer offered a set that mixed firm Franklin favorites with more recent additions to her repertoire, including two Broadway numbers—"I Had A Dream" from "Les Miserables" and "That's All I Ask Of You" from "Phantom Of The Opera"—that she transformed into special emotional experiences, as only she can. Indeed, her gut-wrenching, passionate rendition of "Dream" was one of the evening's highlights.

For the many fans thrilled to see the star back on a New York stage, there was much to enjoy: full-length versions of "I Never Loved A Man (The Way I Love You)," her first Atlantic hit; "I Say A Little Prayer;" "Chain Of Fools;" and the obligatory "Respect." A shimmering "Something He Can Feel" (from Franklin's much underrated "Sparkle" album) was essential Aretha—subtle, sexy, smooth, yet always soulful. Her version of Diana Ross' "It's My Turn" was stunning, turning a standard pop tune into a gospel-style opus.

Franklin appeared relaxed and comfortable throughout the show, ad-libbing and quipping with the crowd, demonstrating some nifty moves on such recent Arista Records material as "Freeway Of Love" and "Jumpin' Jack Flash." A tender, romantic duet with vocalist Peabo Bryson on "Tonight I Celebrate My Love" also proved a high point of an evening that reinforced Franklin's musical creative genius. A peerless

performer, she remains one of contemporary music's greats.

DAVID NATHAN

THE ALLMAN BROTHERS
Avery Fisher Hall
New York, N.Y.

WELL-GROOMED USHERS in tuxedos showed the rowdy, T-shirt-clad concertgoers to their seats when the Allman Brothers, on a 20th anniversary reunion tour, played Avery Fisher Hall June 30 as part of the JVC Jazz Festival. But if Lincoln Center was an unlikely tour stop on this summer's caravan of aging rock heroes, the jazz fest booking of the Allmans is not so crazy. They may not play jazz, but they do swing. And in terms of sheer musicianship and pointed playing, they deserve to wear the mantle of jazz more than, say, hapless festival regulars Spyro Gyra, who performed at Avery Fisher earlier in the evening.

The reunited Allmans—Gregg Allman on organ, Dickey Betts on guitar, Jaimoe and Butch Trucks on drums—ran through most of their standards and a few of their solo works, accompanied by the guitarist and keyboardist from Betts' solo

band, Warren Haynes and Johnny Neal, respectively, with Woody Allen on bass. Allman appeared bemused and distracted during the first set of the nearly three-hour show, and a bad sound mix drowned out his rolling organ in a sea of guitar noise, further distancing him from the show.

But the second set brought a better mix and great Allman jam tunes, such as "Whipping Post," "Southbound," and "In Memory of Elizabeth Reed." Betts and the sullen Allman even seemed to be enjoying themselves, egged on by the enthusiasm and playfulness of Neal and the audience. They smiled at each other during the jams and hugged after the final encore.

From conception to execution, this was a show put on for the fans more than the musicians, who may not particularly like one another but only seem able to make magic (not to mention a few bucks) when they perform old material together. Still, they do it well, the music is special—and in these days of Guns N' Roses, it is heartening to be reminded how a great rock'n'roll band once was able to inspire such devotion among its audience without pandering to it.

STEVEN LICHTMAN

MELLENCAMP: A RELUCTANT 'POP SINGER'

(Continued from preceding page)

ments in "Mansions In Heaven." In the obviously titled "Void In My Heart," he sings "hundred dollar in my pocket/ and it didn't buy a thing/ Now there's a void in my heart/ and a hole in my dream."

"There's a difference between this record and all my other records," Mellencamp says. "Before, I was writing about the things I've seen; I took great pride and pleasure in saying I was a reporter. I wasn't a reporter on this record; this record is full of things I felt."

Mellencamp says his inner conflict revolves around the eternal argument of rock vs. pop. "Pop songs are

meant to be light and airy," he explains. "They're not supposed to mean too much. Rock songs are for real, for keeps. It's the difference between 'I Want To Hold Your Hand' and 'Like A Rolling Stone.'

"But in 1989, there's no room for a rock'n'roll singer. Hey, the only songs I've ever had on the radio are pop songs. Okay, [the 1983 hit] 'Crumblin' Down' was not a pop song... I always felt I got away with something there. But 'Jack And Diane' was a pop song; 'R.O.C.K. In The U.S.A.' was a pop song; 'Cherry Bomb' was a pop song.

"The fact that I was ever commercial was strictly by accident. Quality doesn't mean shit anymore."

In this dour and angry state, Mellencamp has much to occupy his time during the break. He is working on patching up his eight-year marriage (he and his wife, Vicky, separated earlier this year). And though he has given up on the film he has been working on for several years, he has immersed himself in a new passion—painting. He started last year, has finished more than 140 paintings, and with the slightest encouragement will wax on about Rembrandt and Renoir, Degas and da Vinci. Lou Reed, in his song "The Last Great American Whale," refers to Mellencamp as "my painter friend, Donald," and Mellencamp may even display some of his works at a celebrity art show in Los Angeles.

But this does not rule out a return to rock'n'roll. When it happens, however, Mellencamp is promising something different from the populist rock anthems that made him famous during the '80s.

"When I make another record, you're not gonna need no lyric sheets for it," he says. "I'm thinking 'Back In Black,' man—turn up the f-ing guitars and don't even think about playing a clever part on the drums. Just boom, boom, crack! If it gets more intelligent than 1-2-3-4, I don't wanna know about it."

AB BOXSCORE TOP CONCERT GROSSES

AMUSEMENT BUSINESS®			Gross	Attendance	
ARTIST(S)	Venue	Date(s)	Ticket Price(s)	Capacity	Promoter
THE WHO	Sullivan Stadium Foxboro, Mass.	July 12 & 14	\$2,510,176 \$23.50	106,816 sellout	Don Law Co.
THE WHO	Cleveland Stadium Cleveland	July 19	\$1,405,760 \$23	61,120 sellout	Belkin Prods.
THE WHO	Tampa Stadium Tampa, Fla.	July 29	\$1,244,318 \$22.50	55,303 sellout	Cellar Door Concerts
THE WHO	Joe Robbie Stadium Miami	July 31	\$1,222,628 \$22.50	54,339 sellout	Cellar Door Concerts
THE WHO	Pontiac Silverdome Pontiac, Mich.	July 25	\$1,058,000 \$23	46,000 sellout	Belkin Prods.
NEIL DIAMOND	Marcus Amphitheatre Milwaukee	July 19-21	\$913,550 \$20/\$15/\$10	52,721 sellout	Ogden Allied Presents Eric Chandler Ltd.
NEIL DIAMOND	Charlotte Coliseum Charlotte, N.C.	July 28	\$417,482 \$20/\$18	20,982 sellout	Ogden Allied Presents Eric Chandler Ltd.
ELTON JOHN	Hartford Civic Center Hartford, Conn.	July 28	\$355,478 \$22.50	15,799 sellout	Cross Country Concerts
ELTON JOHN	Providence Civic Center Providence, R.I.	July 29	\$320,423 \$22.50	14,241 sellout	Frank J. Russo
BON JOVI BLUE MURDER	Starplex Amphitheatre Dallas	July 25	\$268,022 \$20.50/\$17.50	14,887 20,000	MCA Concerts PACE Concerts
METALLICA THE CULT	Richfield Coliseum Richfield, Ohio	July 8	\$250,890 \$18/\$17	14,652 sellout	Belkin Prods.
PERRY COMO	Fox Theatre St. Louis	July 25-27	\$243,429 \$27.90/\$24.90/ \$21.90/\$15.90	11,475 12,897	Fox Concerts
METALLICA THE CULT	Spectrum Philadelphia	July 19	\$233,817 \$17.50/\$15.50	13,871 14,270	Electric Factory Concerts
CLUB MTV TOUR: TONE LOC PAULA ABDUL MILLI VANILLI INFORMATION SOCIETY, WAS (NOT WAS) 'DOWNTOWN' JULIE BROWN & THE MTV DANCERS	Centrum in Worcester Worcester, Mass.	July 20	\$233,013 \$25	9,819 11,500	Don Law Co.
METALLICA THE CULT	Centrum in Worcester Worcester, Mass.	July 25	\$229,678 \$18.50	12,415 sellout	Don Law Co.
ARETHA FRANKLIN THE AMAZING JOSINI GREG COOPER	Concert Hall The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts Washington, D.C.	July 14-15	\$224,076 \$30	7,734 sellout	Dimensions Unlimited
THE NITRO TOUR: LL COOL J PUBLIC ENEMY SPECIAL ED BIG DADDY KANE SLICK RICK, DE LA SOUL	The Summit Houston	July 14	\$194,303 \$17.50	12,124 12,900	PACE Concerts
CLUB MTV TOUR: TONE LOC PAULA ABDUL MILLI VANILLI, LISA LISA & CULT JAM INFORMATION SOCIETY, WAS (NOT WAS) 'DOWNTOWN' JULIE BROWN & THE MTV DANCERS	Palace of Auburn Hills Auburn Hills, Mich.	July 6	\$191,840 \$20	9,592 11,000	Belkin Prods. Cellar Door Prods.
LITTLE FEAT MELISSA ETHERIDGE	Mann Music Center Philadelphia	July 22	\$190,729 \$17.50/\$15/ \$12.50	13,393 sellout	Electric Factory Concerts
CLUB MTV TOUR: TONE LOC PAULA ABDUL MILLI VANILLI, LISA LISA & CULT JAM INFORMATION SOCIETY, WAS (NOT WAS) 'DOWNTOWN' JULIE BROWN & THE MTV DANCERS	The Coliseum Richfield, Ohio	July 9	\$189,600 \$20	9,480 11,000	Belkin Prods.
REBA MCKENTRE RICKY VAN SHELTON	Starplex Amphitheatre Dallas	July 30	\$175,187 \$18.50/\$15.50	10,594 20,000	MCA Concerts PACE Concerts
CHICAGO/THE BEACH BOYS	Greensboro Coliseum Greensboro, N.C.	July 30	\$171,045 \$22.50	7,602 10,361	Cellar Door Prods.
BON JOVI SKID ROW	Landon Arena Kansas ExpoCentre Topeka, Kan.	July 30	\$162,755 \$17	9,864 sellout	Jam Prods.
DEBBIE GIBSON	Centrum in Worcester Worcester, Mass.	July 28	\$160,377 \$18.50	9,066 11,263	Don Law Co.
TIFFANY NEW KIDS ON THE BLOCK TOMMY PAGE	Grandstand Delaware State Fair Harrington, Del.	July 28	\$144,661 \$20/\$16/ \$10/\$4	11,258 sellout	in-house

Copyrighted and compiled by Amusement Business, A Billboard Publications, Inc. publication. Boxscores are compiled every Tuesday and should be submitted to Desi Smith in Nashville at 615-321-4276; Ray Waddell in Los Angeles at 213-859-5338; Louise Zepp in Chicago at 312-236-2085. For research information and cost contact Laura Strohn in Nashville at 615-321-4250.

PUBLICITY PRINTS

Lithographed On Heavy Gloss Stock
BLACK & WHITE 8x10's
500 - \$65.00 1000 - \$90.00

COLOR
1000 - \$396.00

Above Prices include Typesetting & Freight
Send 8x10 Photo - Check or M.O.

Full Color & B/W Posters
Composites - Cards - Other Sizes

Send For Catalog & Samples

APC PICTURES
1867 E. Florida, Dept. BB
Springfield, MO 65803
(417) 869-9433 or 869-3456

19,200 SEATS



reunion arena
777 Sports Street
Dallas, Texas 75207
(214) 658-7070

SWEEP UP PROFITS WITH US

Kansas EXPOCENTRE
One ExpoCentre Drive, Topeka, KS 66612-1442
(913) 235-4986

