

2 - Section 10

CHICAGO TRIBUNE, SUNDAY, JUNE 29, 1969

THE SOUND A Cold, Cruel New York City Does Have Those Musical Islands in the Sky

BY ROBB BAKER
New York

Does a cold city have several friends when I tell them I was thinking of moving to New York? It's a cold city, a cruel one, they insist. Billy Greenstein, Thomas and Pauling, Tramps living on street corners and passersby not even smiling.

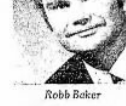
After two months here, I would say instead that New York is a fast city and, because of the obsession with speed, it seems a cold city, especially to out-of-town visitors.

There is, in every social or economic level, as much to do, as much to see. A certain class do them all, and, as more and more people go away, frustration begins to build. People try to go faster and faster in order to get more and more done. They push and hustle and shove. They scream at fast drivers for being too slow when they're in a cab—and one accident when they're out. And the more the crowds rush, the more angrier they become, the louder they become, the greater the frustration grows.

Now-here to New York's music. Soul ballads and while, Early Rascals records, Jack Feliciano, from teenagers like Little Havana and Laura Nyro. It's all there. The lesson, the frustration, the wanting to do more and more—and the



Mebel Mercer... an island of softness.



Robb Baker

trapped feeling of not being able to do so. City Michel on her first album seems to have "Come to the City" and escaped unscathed. Sued of all is the attitude that many of these people have. New Yorkers seem to have against anyone who tries to bring softness or tenderness or simplicity back into music. But then, certain doesn't learn much from its own mistakes.

There are exceptions. Both The Band and The Incredible String Band present tremendous evidence when they played the Fillmore. But then the crowds weren't the usual hard-rock-loving young set

on these nights either. The people who came were already believers, you might say.

Other islands of softness stand out in the sea of hardness and over-identification that's marred most music I've heard in the city. People improvising around the fountain in Central Park or Washington Square. A concert by Mebel Mercer and Ruby Shurk in Texas Hall. And a short, beautiful appearance by Ethel Waters at the Billy Graham crusade.

Two friends and I had gone to the last mainly to hear that Miss Waters would be there. It wasn't hard to spot her as soon as we looked at the speaker's podium. She didn't wear a nightgown and she didn't have a wig.

After the opening songs and a solo by George Beverly Smead, the song leader whose name Waters in the microphone. She moved slowly, looking softly from the speaker a few minutes, then sang two songs, "I Don't See"

[which I have on an old Grand Award album by the Billy Jackson] and "It's Wonderful to Have God for a Father."

Lita Stiles Mercer, who no longer has the power and control over her voice that she once had. Both spoke many of the lyrics of their songs now, but—just as with another singer who supposedly "had her voice" but kept her "on" in the end, July Graham—her incredible ability to move an audience in tears with meaningful, emotional deliveries has not diminished one bit.

But a Billy Graham crusade is not a Fillmore audience. And a disturbing thing happened at that Good Village rock hall a week ago last night.

The program was a pretty good hard rock show on the whole, with performances by The Grateful Dead, John Surman, and Billie Jean King. The Grateful Dead, John Surman, and Billie Jean King were the main attraction. The show was a pretty good hard rock show on the whole, with performances by The Grateful Dead, John Surman, and Billie Jean King.

But at one point, Buddy did a rather inspired version of Otis Redding's "Cigarettes and Coffee." John Surman's sharp, electric guitar and the sloppy bass section, though, G.D.'s, were really ahead. I there was only Buddy, singing and on drums, plus soft organ and bass in the background.

The Buddy had completely found himself as a vocalist yet, but doing things which were good things. His voice has a wide range, from whispers to screams, and he succeeds at almost all the touches of soul and gospel that he tries, he's not quite as good when he tries "soul."

But about half of the Fillmore crowd would have come if I. There were cries of "Get off the stage!" and "Go home." Buddy himself held his ground—did an entire set, when he left the stage he was shaking with anger. A standing ovation from those of us who did

appreciate what he was trying to do, but I'm not sure how much.

I've similar events in recent weeks also stand out. Both involve young, very good folk singers who tried to bring their music into close proximity with the rock scene.

I'd hard to describe how rude the crowds were in Texas Hall. The scene or to John Surman at the Fillmore.

Van Zandt and Braden are both young composers who are taking the folk form back to the way it was before Bob Dylan transformed it into contemporary music. But that there's anything wrong with that—well, Braden and Van Zandt have some songs that are in the middle Dylan, highly poetic style. But they have songs that set them apart as well. Just like the ballads from the Appalachian and the British Isles.

Thomas sings of Caroline, the miner's daughter, whose "ways were broad and it seemed to me that she was washed battle her" of the young girl who says her dad is a miner. The album, "The Mother the Mother" (Papp's 798 4310).

"My lover comes in the night with a rose on her hair and her lover's dance" purple all over her cheeks, her hair, her eyes. In waiting, she'll stand watch my window and on the face and the hair, she tells me she loves me. She'll be there when I come through a meadow, she'll be there when I come through a meadow.

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Moros Brando in a United States embassy in a far eastern country in "The Ugly American." Sandra Church co-stars.

TODAY'S MOVIES

Brandon and Diplomacy in Asia

11:30 a.m.—Channel 9
"THE NARROW HELLS"
Time: 1 hour, 30 minutes.

1:00 p.m.—Channel 22
"CAPTAIN BRIDGES POLICE"
Time: 1 hour, 30 minutes.

1:30 p.m.—Channel 2
"REINOLDS"
Time: 1 hour, 30 minutes.

2:00 p.m.—Channel 7
"SHERLOCK HOLMES"
Time: 1 hour, 30 minutes.

3:00 p.m.—Channel 5
"THE UGLY AMERICAN"
Time: 1 hour, 30 minutes.

3:30 p.m.—Channel 2
"EUREKA STOCKADE"
Time: 1 hour, 30 minutes.

4:00 p.m.—Channel 2
"THE BROTHERS RICH"
Time: 1 hour, 30 minutes.

4:30 p.m.—Channel 3
"JASSY"
Time: 1 hour, 30 minutes.

5:00 p.m.—Channel 2
"WONDERS OF ALADDIN"
Time: 1 hour, 30 minutes.

5:30 p.m.—Channel 2
"THE ROBINSON HUNT"
Time: 1 hour, 30 minutes.

MAILBAG

CHICAGO—My sister says that Paul Newman is about 32 years old, and I say he's 30. Tell me if I'm right. —K. C.

Your brother wrong. Newman is really old. He was born in a Cleveland suburb in 1925. That makes him 44!

PONTIAC—Please settle an argument between my husband and me. He says that it was Sandra Dee who played in "A Summer Place." I said that it was Connie Stevens. Who is right? —M. V.

MIAMI—The deceptively thin five played Betty.

CHICAGO—My girl friend says that Doris Day's hair is white, but I think she is blonde. Can you help us? —D. C.

Blonde, but, sorry, she gets a little bit older.

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