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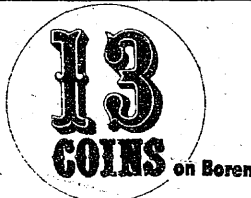
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TEMPORARY BILLBOARDING

DANCE — The Independent Choreographers Workshop will be staged tonight, tomorrow and Sunday in the Meany Studio Theater at the University of Washington.

THEATER — Empty Space has the world-premiere run of "Oregon Gothic," written by Kurt Beattie. New at A Contemporary Theater is "The Shadow Box," prize-winning play by Michael Cristofer.

MUSIC — Stanley Chapple conducts the Thalia Symphony Sunday evening in Meany Hall on the U.W. campus. Tomorrow night, David Burgess will play classical guitar in the Seattle Concert Theater.

FESTIVAL — Asian music, dancing, food and crafts will be offered in the International District tomorrow, starting at 1 o'clock in the afternoon, during the district's annual Summer Festival.

VISUAL ARTS — "Eye for Eye: Egyptian Images and Inscriptions," a major exhibition of 76 objects, will open to the public at noon Sunday in the Bellevue Art Museum. This begins the Seattle area's Egyptian summer,

and many galleries are entering into the spirit. Pat Fridell's Egyptian theme paintings are at the Louise Matzke Gallery. Mary Lou Nussralah's "Egypt and the Universe" paintings will preview at Galerie Regina, Bellevue, from 6 to 9 tonight. The Kiku Gallery will open a group show, "Variations on a Tut Theme," from 6 to 9 p.m. tomorrow. Arts Resource Services will open a show of Bruce Williams' photos of Egypt with a reception at 7 p.m. Thursday.

MOVIES — New and recommended: Simone Signoret in the Oscar-winning "Madame Rosa," at the Moore Egyptian, and the science-fiction thriller, "Capricorn One," at the Lewis & Clark, Lake City, Lynn and John Danz.

ROCK — A hot lineup begins with Bob Seger and Wet Willie tonight at the Seattle Center Coliseum. Little Feat and John Hall will appear at Paramount Northwest tomorrow. Tom Petty & the Heartbreakers and the David Johansen Group will play the Paramount Tuesday. Tonight in the U.W. Ethnic Cultural Theater, Chinas Comidas and The Feelings will do a punk show.

ON THE TOWN

Three obscure but talented singer-songwriters at local clubs

by PATRICK MacDONALD
Times staff reporter

We are in the age of the singer-songwriter in popular music. Where once vocalists depended on others to supply material, now they're expected to write their own.

Three largely unheralded but nevertheless talented members of the genre are on the local night club scene this week.

Jeffrey Comanor, who has penned hits for others but never quite hit the mark himself, is charming audiences at the Terry Avenue Freight House.

Having only heard his recordings, one is unprepared for the madcap humor that pervades his stage show. Many of his recorded songs are charming, though not exactly guffaw-inspiring. In fact, he's best known for romantic ballads. One of them, "We'll Never Have to Say Goodbye Again," was a recent hit for England Dan and John Ford Coley.

In performance, Comanor probably couldn't get through one verse of the song without breaking up, judging by the set reviewed earlier this week.

He much prefers to do his zanier songs. He is a natural comedian and one wonders how he ever gets down-to-earth enough to write his rather straightforward romantic ballads.

A number of local musicians have been sitting in with Comanor. Michael Castaneda and Mark Elder, excellent guitarists and singers formally known as Border-song, and another backup guitarist, are with Comanor this weekend. It's a delightful show, well worth seeing.

RICHARD BASKIN, who wrote much of the music for Robert Altman's films "Nashville" and "Buffalo Bill and the Indians," and whose songs inspired "Welcome to L.A.," directed by Alan Rudolph and produced by Altman, is back at the Bombay Bicycle Shop this weekend.

Baskin, 29, writes songs that are much like Altman's movies — obscure but eloquent, confusing but intriguing.

The songs are highly personal, almost therapeutic. Baskin feels them deeply, obviously, enough so that he is not above demanding silence while he works.

In a previous visit to the Bombay in January he won a local following that is expected to pack the place this weekend. His fans are listeners. They pay attention.

Baskin said he is working on a new movie directed by Nicolas Roeg, who did "Performance" and "The Man Who Fell to Earth." It's called "Hot" and is about a group of miners exposed to radiation during a nuclear test

blast. "I'm writing mutant music," Baskin said.

LAST NIGHT, Townes Van Zandt, the best of the three, ended a two-day stand at the Rainbow.

Van Zandt has been around for almost ten years, supplying other singers with first-rate songs. Somehow, perhaps because he's always been on small record labels, he's never made much of a dent himself.

But, finally, he's beginning to get some recognition. Emmylou Harris recorded his "Pancho and Lefty" and Doc Watson did a beautiful version of "If I Needed You."

Tall and gaunt, looking like a young Abe Lincoln, Van Zandt mesmerized the Rainbow audience with his intricate, sensitive songs — breaking the ice between numbers with some of the corniest jokes ever.

He sang about barmaids, card games, outlaws, girl friends, about traveling and being lonely. He did a few funny tunes, including a hilarious one about being in a fraternity. He was accompanied by a guitarist and a violinist.

Opening the show was the Skyboys, the band playing the Rainbow this weekend. The contemporary Western group did a great show, highlighted by excellent pedal steel and electric guitar, stunning vocals and hot piano-playing.