

Saint Patrick returns to Emerald Empire

By Matt Meyer
Of the Emerald

A little bit of heaven dropped into the Hult Center Wednesday night.

Pat Metheny, the jazz guitarist *Rolling Stone* magazine says "plays like wind through the trees in heaven," and his band mesmerized their audience with three straight hours of angelic music. Whether making his guitar whisper and caress sweet melodies sounding like a gentle breeze, or whipping out wild synthesized guitar runs in a whirlwind of sound, Metheny blew through his second Eugene appearance this year with energy, humor and consistent quality.

"Yeah, it was a lot of fun out there," Metheny said backstage after the show. "We've had four really good nights in a row, and we've been ready to play here."

Other performances on this tour will be recorded for a live album Metheny is considering.

Unfortunately, the Eugene concert won't be included, due to difficulties scheduling the recording equipment.

Metheny said he'd heard and read good things about the Hult Center, and was curious to know whether they were true. "Everyone kept telling me it was the best. You're always skeptical when you hear that."

"It's by far the best there is. It's probably the best concert hall in the world."

"To give you an idea, this is the first time in over four years we haven't used our own P.A. This place is really incredible. It's like playing in a cross between a recording studio and a living room."

Despite Metheny's glowing report, the sound system *did* have problems adjusting to the hall's first jazz-rock show. The much-acclaimed acoustics of the Silva Concert Hall served only to amplify poor mixing at the beginning of the concert

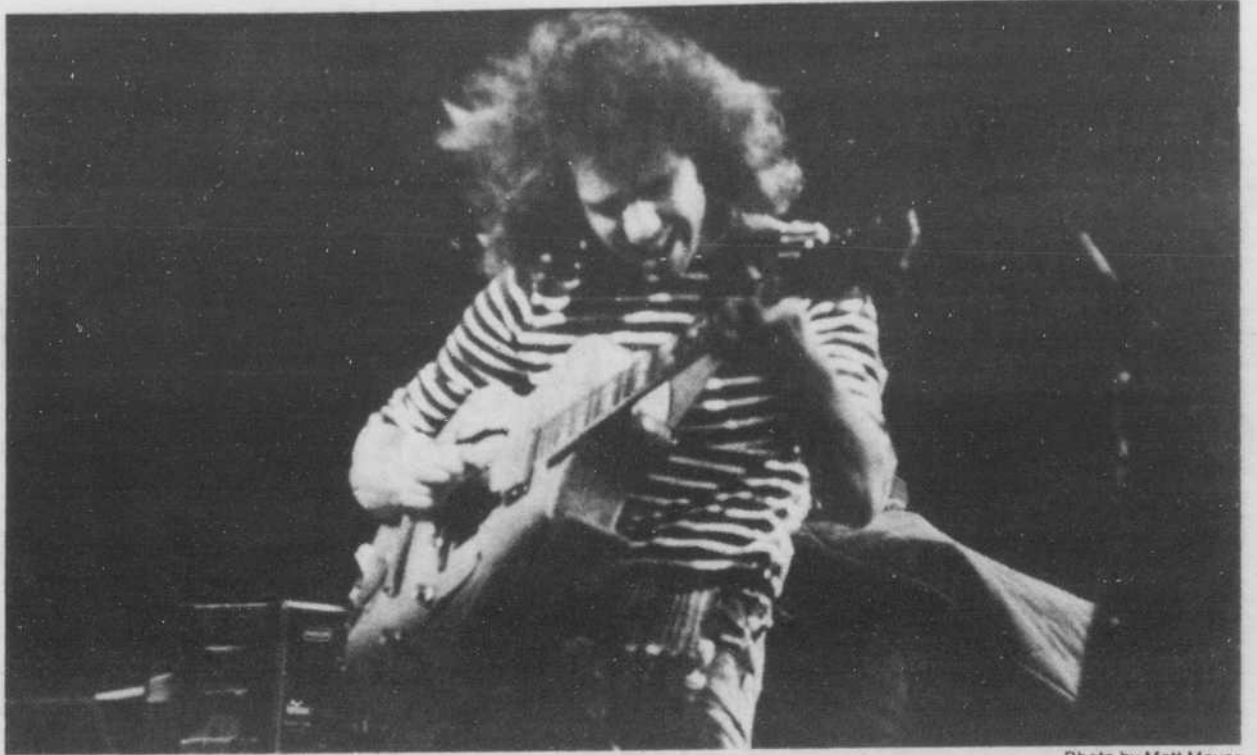


Photo by Matt Meyer

Pat Metheny screamed solos and murmured melodies while living up to his reputation as the guitarist who "plays like wind through the trees in heaven" during his performance at the Hult Center Wednesday.

and electronic hum at the end. During the first two songs, Lyle Mays' spectacular piano work was almost inaudible and the treble on Dan Gottlieb's cym-

bals and Nana Vasconcelos' percussive instruments was similarly muted. Later in the concert, a phenomenal berimbau solo by Vasconcelos was marred by a distracting bass hum.

One song, "James," featured a stringless guitar-synthesizer called a synclavier, with a deep, bell-like tone somewhere between tubular bells and a clavier. According to Metheny, the instrument "translates guitar-like gestures into something the computer can understand. It's really 'out'."

His synclavier is a prototype, and there are still a few bugs to be worked out. At times, he says, it throws in notes that haven't been fingered by the musician.

"It's very hard to play," Metheny said. "You've got to be so careful, you can't really get into it like other instruments. Even tonight I had some trouble with it."

Metheny's music has two components: academic and emotional. Some of the songs take scholarly concentration to fully appreciate the musical stylings and improvisations the band produces. At other times, the music quietly reaches down into the listener's soul and unexpectedly releases emotions in

a rich flow of feeling. In either mode, the band blends traditional melodic jazz with straight-ahead modern jazz improvisations.

Finally, the Pat Metheny Group blends the modern, high-tech sound of synthesizers with the mellow, traditional sounds of acoustic guitar and the ancient berimbau, a percussive instrument resembling a gourd attached to a bow.

"We're real interested in using advances in technology in a musical way," Metheny says. "I see no reason why a berimbau — which is thousands of years old — shouldn't appear next to a synthesizer. If you've got something to say, a musical statement to make, it doesn't matter if you use a kazoo or a \$10,000 guitar synthesizer."

The audience Wednesday night gladly accepted all phases of Metheny's music, from the wildly abstract to the soft and smooth. One of the high points of the concert was the debut of six original tunes written a week before the band started its two-month tour. Many of the songs were untitled, and varied from a soft acoustic ballad (accompanied by duck imitations by Vasconcelos) to hard-hitting improvisational pieces with percussion.

debbie roberts

a true reflection

Ah, adolescence! — a time of "zits" and innocence. For most of us, puberty was a pain, and growing up was just an awkward phase, or so our parents said. In "Gregory's Girl," adolescence abounds, and no one is spared its cuteness, insecurity, and moments of pain — including the audience.

"Gregory's Girl" is a refreshing respite from the formula drugged-out teenage runaway movie and the kid-sex movies a la Brooke Shields rampant nowadays in television and cinema.

The film, made in Cumberland, Scotland, is filled with quaint phrases such as "a wee bit, lassie" and "really goot, mum." Best of all, "Gregory's Girl" has teenagers who really look like kids growing up.

One of those kids is Gregory (Gordon John Sinclair), a spindle-legged soccer player who deals with acne and who by his own admission "bruises like a peach."

A bright boy with a strange sense of humor (he likes to dance lying down), Gregory is terribly in love with the star of his soccer team — Dorothy (Dee Hepburn).

Dorothy is everything Gregory isn't — self-

assured, talented and quite robust. Dorothy "hardly bruises at all."

The story, thereafter, follows a delightful, though sometimes too cute, course charting Gregory's antics and efforts as he tries to ask Dorothy for a date.

One scene in which Dorothy encounters Gregory in the locker room is particularly endearing as Gregory in embarrassment tries to shield his "breasts" from Dorothy's gaze.

Another scene has Gregory asking advice about love, not from his friends, but from his sister, Madeline (Allison Forster). Madeline is wise to the ways of courtship and tells Gregory that he better start concentrating on colors when he dresses.

But Madeline still sensibly drinks "ginger beer and ice cream — because she's just a kid after all."

"Gregory's Girl" isn't the best film, but it makes you feel good about having gone through puberty, and it makes you awfully glad that you're done with it all. The acting is natural, the ending has an entertaining twist, and the film is a charmer.

WHAT GOES CRUNCH IN THE NIGHT?

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Peanut Butter Chocolate Chip	

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