

Encore!

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good to perform on stage, Jones said.

He said performing is the essence of his career, one that he loves and specifically chooses materials for.

Jones explained that he enjoys pleasing his audiences. That, he says, is the reason he performs.

"That's what I aim to do every time," he said. "I want them to leave feeling good."

Unlike what many may believe, and despite his rather bawdy acts of the past, Jones said many of his fans also include men. Among the many was Elvis Presley. "The King" himself, who would warm up before his performances singing Jones' hits.

Jones said he met Presley in September of 1965, during his first year in the music business. He had one album and three singles out when he met Presley, and Presley owned a copy of every one of them.

In addition, Presley called in local radio stations to request Jones' songs over and over again. After the two men met, they became good friends, Jones said.

Other male fans have told Jones stories that include the fact they met their wives listening to his songs, he said.

But bawdy or not, Jones has certainly changed his look. He's shed the tight shirts and pants for a chic, all-black suit and t-shirt look. He said there were several reasons for the

change, one being comfort and the other being the way the press portrayed his former look.

"They were looking at me like an Italian pimp," Jones said, adding the critics never considered that he may have taken off the tie because it choked him.

Jones said his new look still allows him to be himself, and allows his voice to continue to be the center of the performance.

He chooses his music by the performability of the song, he said.

"I like all kinds of music," he said. "It's an asset for a live show but sometimes it's a drawback when you go into the studio."

But Jones said he still keeps listening, trying to find that ideal song for his next performance or album. Often, after listening to a song, Jones finds something different in a song and tries it the way he sees it.

"Kiss" for instance, Prince did it on purpose like that. I heard it really as a rhythm and blues song," Jones explained. "Green, Green Grass Of Home" was originally sung as a country song, but Jones said he saw more in it and churned it into yet another hit.

"I try to get into a song as much as I can," he said. "It's like a good actor, you can see some actors, you think that's natural. I try to make it believable."

And believe it or not, before it even became trendy to fight drugs, Jones was there discouraging its use.

"It's a shame that it's (drugs) become so important," Jones said. "I've always enjoyed a drink, but I know when to drink and when not to. The best way to do anything is with a clear mind."

Jones said he tries to get the message across but it has been difficult. He said too many famous younger people advocate fighting drug abuse, but don't necessarily do what they say.

"It's a shame," Jones said. "You've got to practice what you preach."

As for the future, Jones said he may return to the studio soon. There will, however, be a little something different in this album if he has his way, he said.

"I want to do more of it live," he said.

Jones said he will be touring Europe in April, after his U.S. tour ends but will not be visiting any of the Eastern European countries as of yet.

"I want to go, but I'm frightened," he said.

As for now, the focus is on Eugene and his performance here. Jones' concert is being brought in by Regal Productions, a local production company.

Tickets for Jones' show are available at all Hult Center Ticket Outlets, and are priced at \$23.50 and \$19.

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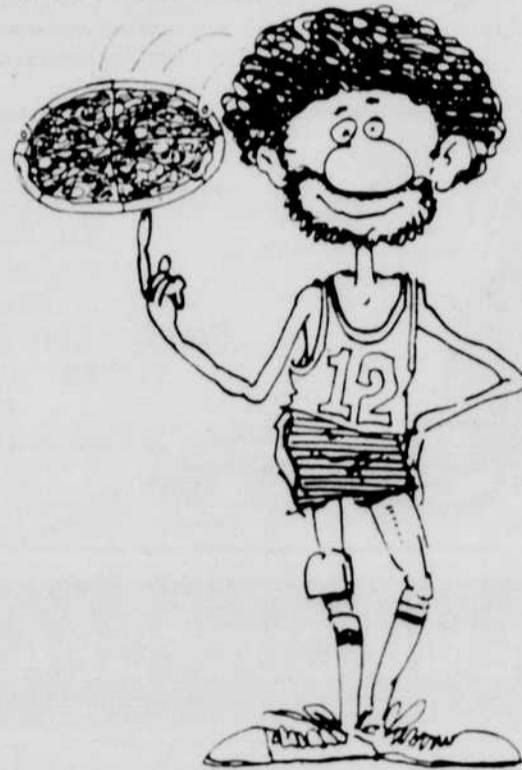


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