

ARTS

Twists strengthen Simon tradition

By David Valdez
Emerald Contributor

The Paul Simon concert in Tacoma proved once again that his gift for adaptation is brilliant. His brilliance should be demonstrated again tomorrow night in Portland, when he performs in the Memorial Coliseum at 7:30 p.m.

Tickets are \$28.50.

Review

Although his last two albums have been based on unoriginal concepts (the indigenous musics of South Africa and Brazil), his ability to bring the music to the pop charts is incomparable.

Many world music artists have tried to break into the American pop music scene, including Johnny Klegg and Savuka, and Ladysmith Black Mambazo. They have come to the U.S. in hopes of reaching a far more vast audience.

Their music has had the power and the craftsmanship necessary to succeed in the market, but none has achieved the success of Simon. Although his most recent adaptation is not as sparkling as *Graceland*, he is a tour de force in his live shows.

As a performance resource, Simon and Garfunkel definitely helps the show. Simon frequently draws on the glory of the past to evoke familiar images in his show.

Interspersing old standards with newer music provides a continuity throughout. His re-

cent experiences have certainly affected the styles of the old songs. Simon rearranges several songs using world rhythms and harmonies.

"Cecilia" is performed with Latin rhythms and a new interpretation of the words, giving the song a refreshing new guise. He also breathes new life into "Bridge Over Troubled Water" by incorporating some African harmonies and finishing the song with a reggae beat.

During his three encores, he allowed himself to shine with solo renditions of favorite Simon and Garfunkel tunes. With just his guitar, a spotlight and his voice, Simon evokes images of beauty and depth that overshadowed his band.

The tour band was by no means inadequate. During one of Simon's breaks, his band highlighted its reed player. His use of a synthesized clarinet was phenomenal, and the fusion solo was a great break from pop sounds.

However, the guitarists weren't masters of subtlety and often covered solos with the barest adequacy.

The bass player was as good, if not better, than the studio artists from the album. The rhythm section sparkled. The keyboard solo leading into "Bridge Over Troubled Water" was creative and surprisingly different from the original.

All three percussionists were wonderful. They synthesized

different styles and instrumentation into a solid tapestry that almost distracted from the melody. In a band created to highlight a solo artists, it is great to find such excellent musicians.

There are, however, some inadequacies in the production of the show. I found myself straining to hear the horn section during most of the show. This was particularly distracting during the brass feature in "Call Me Al."

As usual, the mix went heavy on the guitar sound at the expense of subtler instruments. Simon was off-key during "Call Me Al." Perhaps the band's volume overcame his monitor and kept him guessing.

The song selection was heavy with Simon and Garfunkel songs, and it would have been nice to hear more songs from the new album. The last two encores would have been an excellent time to introduce the crowd to a new song.

Differences between an artist and a concert reviewer are inevitable. Minor complaints can be ignored when the show's production is good.

The "Born at the Right Time" tour is professional and very well produced. The music is timely and timeless. None of the criticism matters when 25,000 people join in harmony to sing "The Boxer" and be at one with each other.

For ticket information on tomorrow night's performance, call 248-4496.

Central American fabric art displayed at campus museum

An exhibition of wearable art by the Cuna Indians of Panama will be on display at the University of Oregon Museum of Natural History through March 17.

"Molas: Art of the Cuna Woman" features decorative

activities and rituals; representations of indigenous flora and fauna; geometric designs and those influenced by European contact, such as commercial labels and insignias.

The Cuna Indians live on

Mola designs draw from a variety of influences and like other art forms, reveal much about the culture in which they were created.

textile panels with designs made by sewing pieces of brightly colored fabric together in a technique known as reverse applique. Pairs of these multicolored panels are then sewn into a blouse, with one panel forming the blouse front and another forming the back.

In Cuna, the word "mola" can also refer to cloth or men's and women's blouses.

Mola panels are often sold to tourists and shops to provide income for the Cuna Indians.

Mola designs draw from a variety of influences and like other art forms, reveal much about the culture in which they were created. The molas featured in this exhibition include individual interpretations of village

the San Blas Islands off the northern coast of Panama and the neighboring mainland, east of the Panama Canal. Originally non-aggressive farmers, the Cuna retreated to the jungles and highlands when the Spanish came to the area.

Only in the 20th century, and mostly within the last 40 years, have the Cuna been greatly influenced by other cultures.

The exhibition includes molas from the Museum of Natural History's collection, as well as numerous molas on loan.

Hattie Mae Nixon, coordinator of the exhibition, will present an hourlong slide-illustrated lecture about molas and the Cuna Indians at 4.30 p.m. Friday.

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