

Tom Petty is one of rock's premier rockers

By DIAHANN NADEAU
Herald Special

Tom Petty and the Heartbreakers played a sold out concert at Kingswood on Labor Day Weekend. Petty, who is notoriously wary of reporters and interviews, was totally open with his fans. Relaxed, grinning, friendly, and outgoing, Petty was a delight to watch, a charismatic master of ceremonies who had the audience enthralled from beginning to end.

The stage was decorated with a number of props, including a full size totem pole, stuffed grizzly bear, ox head, wooden Indian, suit of armor, and a few other oddities. The band opened with American Girl from their 1976 debut album, went on to The Reason Why, from Petty's solo album, the brilliant Full Moon Fever. There followed two hours of old favorites, such as Refugee, You Got Lucky, Even the Losers, Rebels, Breakdown, Don't Come Around Here No More, and Jamming Me, complete with updated lyrics - "take back Batman and Pete Rose."

Interspersed through the old songs were the new: Free Falling ("I like that one myself," Petty ad-

mitted at the end of it), Yer So Bad ("my sister got lucky and married a Yuppie, took him for all he was worth, now she's a swinger and dating a singer, I can't decide which is worse"), the incredibly pretty Face in the Crowd, and Running Down a Dream. He also included some covers, Route 66, Should I Stay or Should I Go, Feel a Whole Lot Better and Don't Bring Me Down.

Heartbreakers Mike Campbell on lead guitar, Benmont Tench, "the boy with the boogie-woogie brain," on keyboards, Howie Epstein on bass, and Stan Lynch on drums were all excellent. But Petty is the man to watch. Not just another pretty face in rock (someone once described him as having "a face only a mother could love, and then only on payday"), he is too thin and weak chinped to be attractive. However, he is so charming and active that it is impossible to take one's eyes off him.

Petty led the crowd through lots of hand clapping and singing, admitting, after letting the audience sing most of Breakdown, to being "lazy and irresponsible." He then amended that to being just lazy.

Petty is not an irresponsible rocker; on this tour he has Greenpeace at the gates, petitions and memberships on hand. He castigated the sixties nostalgia trend - "I'm really sick of that Woodstock s... that's on TV, only because I think nostalgia's not a healthy thing, it means nothing's going on now. But the most important thing in the next decade is whether or not we can save the planet we live on." These thoughts earned him tremendous applause. Mind you, this was a raucous crowd, a partying crowd; Petty would have elicited applause for reciting the alphabet.

Watching Tom Petty and the Heartbreakers in concert gives one an insight into the band that just can't be found on their records. This is a group that is at its best on stage, communing with the fans, drawing on their enthusiasm, displaying a playfulness and spontaneity that is a joy to watch. Petty will be back, and fans should make every effort to catch him next time. These guys are a lot of fun and offer a brilliant repertoire to boot, making this one of the best rock and roll acts around.

Take the plunge into "The Abyss"

By DIAHANN NADEAU
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The Abyss has created quite a stir since it opened a few weeks ago. It has been compared to E.T., although it is also billed as a thriller/suspense film. This is an odd combination and one just doesn't quite know what to expect. Well, everything you've heard is true; this is a heartwarming thriller (!), a love story, a movie about sweet aliens. In short, The Abyss is familiar in lots of ways, but at the same time it is a unique film, and compelling from start to finish.

A nuclear sub gets into trouble deep in the waters between Florida and Cuba. A submersible oil drilling complex is working nearby. The Navy commandeers the "ship" and its crew to help the Seal team rescue any survivors off the submarine. They are all offered huge bonuses, and given little choice. Foreman Virgil "Bud" Brigman (Ed Harris) is less than thrilled, but agrees to the mission.

Along comes his soon-to-be ex-wife, Lindsey (Mary Elizabeth Mastrantonio), the project engineer, the woman who designed the ship. (The word ship is used loosely here). She's not a happy engineer; the project will be ruined by this little adventure. Besides that, Seal leader Koffee (Michael Biehn) is one seriously disturbed guy. No one realizes quite how disturbed, unfortunately.

The rescue team finds a floating coffin and a bunch of nuclear warheads. Lindsey sees an alien creature, as does Jammer, a crewman who goes into a coma

from the fright. To make matters worse, there is a huge tropical storm brewing on land, further complicating matters for the underwater crews. Contact is lost with the command vessel, a huge crane pulls the ship off its ledge, crew members die in a terrifying rush of water.

That is a lot of action already, but it doesn't stop there. Koffee goes around the bend, armed with a nuclear warhead. The alien thing visits the ship. Murder threatens. And Lindsey and Bud rediscover love.

The Abyss is full of spectacular technical effects, and the underwater photography is superb. This is a blockbuster movie, there is nothing little about this film. Taut action sequences carry the audience along at a breathless pace, until a respite comes in the shape of the E.T.-like creature resting in the abyss. But will one nutcase ruin the wondrous contact made?

Written and directed by James Cameron, whose hits include The Terminator and Aliens, The Abyss offers a good cast, with likeable lead characters, and enough action for three movies. This is entertainment, pure and simple.

Veteran stars bubble forth in soap

ASK DICK KLEINER



DICK KLEINER

By Dick Kleiner

Q. I believe I've seen Linda Cristal of "General Hospital" before. Was it possible that she was on "High Chaparral" with Leif Erickson? — D.M.G., Lawrence, Mass.

Q. I watched a '42 movie called "Flying Tigers" with John Wayne. Is the girl who played in that movie the same that plays Lila Quartermain on "General Hospital"? If so, how old was she in that picture? — L.A., Baytown, Texas.

A. "General Hospital" is crowded with veteran actresses. Yes, Linda Cristal was on "High Chaparral," and yes, Anna Lee was in "Flying Tigers" (she was 23 when that was made) and is presently one of those quaint Quartermaines.

Q. When I was a young boy in England, more than 30 years ago, we used to see a comedian in the tradition of the British music halls named

Wilfred Pickles. I wonder if Christina Pickles of "St. Elsewhere" is related to him? — D.P., Morgantown, W.V.

A. Yes. Christina tells me she is Wilfred's niece. He died, incidentally, in '78.

Q. I love the show "Empty Nest." I know about Kristy McNichol. Could you please tell me about the young lady who plays her sister? Is it true that she is the daughter of an actress? If so, who? — A.E., Houston, Texas.

A. Dinah Manoff is the name of the young lady in question. Manoff won a 1980 Tony Award for "I Ought to Be in Pictures" and reprised the role in the film of the same name. She was a regular on the TV series "Soap" and appeared in the TV movies "Raid on Entebbe," "For Ladies Only," "The Seduction of Gina," "Flight 90" and "Celebrity." Her motion picture credits include "Child's Play," "Boy's Life," "Backfire" and "Ordinary People." And yes, she is the daughter of Lee Grant.

Q. How old is Jan-Michael Vincent? My husband says he is 45 to 50. I say more like 35 to 40. Who's right? — D.P., Lockport, Ill.

A. The correct age falls between your two estimates. Jan-Michael is 44.

Q. As a family, we enjoy the older shows such as "My Three Sons" and "The Donna Reed Show." Is Fred MacMurray still living? What about Donna Reed and Carl Betz? — S.D.H., Idaho Falls, Idaho.

A. MacMurray is still alive — he's 81 — but both Donna Reed and Carl Betz have passed away.

Q. I recently saw Debbie Allen and Phyllicia Rashad on "The Debbie Allen Special." I've heard they are sisters. Is this true? If so, which is older? — J.B., Sparta, Mich.

A. Yes, they are sisters. Phyllicia is the oldest of the two.

(Send your questions to: Ask Dick Kleiner, c/o Newspaper Enterprise Association, 200 Park Ave., New York, N.Y. 10166. Due to the volume of mail, personal replies cannot be provided.)

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