



World Class Entertainment presented during variety show at Quincy Music Theatre

By Byron Spires, Herald Editor

World class entertainment came to town last weekend. Gordon McCleary's Variety Show for America swept the stage of the Quincy Music Theatre with big band music, singers, dancers, acrobatics, magicians and comedians. A semblance of television's hey day of entertainment, reminiscent of the Ed Sullivan Show, less Topo Gigio, the production had all the ear-marks of classic variety.

Emceed by Rich Natole, an "A" class entertainer in his own right, the production flowed along a river of pure pleasure. Natole's vocal and singing impressions kept the audience rolling in a cloud of laughter. His rendition of "the National Anthem" as sung by former presidents since Kennedy was classic.

If you like the cool sounds of Bobby Darin and Frank Sinatra, then you would have enjoyed the two male singers. Ned Fasullo and Bobby Kemp owned the stage when they performed their melodies of songs from the past. Both crooners brought back a lot of memories of days gone by when men sang heart songs and women swayed under their trance. Fasullo sang many of the old standards now racked away in album covers. He sang the audience down a memory lane of torch songs. His rendition of "Mack the Knife" was pure Bobby D. from the start. Kemp's high energy performance and hyperactive stage presence captivated the audience in a whirlwind of Sinatra songs tagged with a little Tony Bennett for extra measure. His "New York, New York" rendition rocked the house.

In front of, behind, and around the entire show was Coates and Company, a 16 piece big band orchestra from Tallahassee. Their performance rivaled anything New York or Las Vegas clubs could produce. Glenn Miller tunes were well represented by Coates & Company during their sets of pure musical joy.

Magician Erick Olson stammered the crowd with his mixture of magic and comedy. Olson's hysterical escape from a straight jacket wooed the audience into a clatter of clapping and laughter.

The Liang Acrobatic and Comedy Show gave the QMT audience a glance into plate spinning. Few acrobats can manipulate eight plates and move as gracefully as Liang can. The stage became a platform of perfection as Caroline Picart and Darian Chancellor of Tallahassee glided across the floor in modern dance. The pair gracefully performed as one, enchanting the audience with their every move.

When the lights dimmed and the sweet music of the grand piano filled the air, the beautiful voice of Avis Berry swept across the audience like a breath of fresh air. Accompanied by William Peterson, Berry took her listeners on a journey of song. From gospel to torch she mesmerized the crowd.

Way before the audience was through the show ended, leaving a gnawing expectation of possibly another performance. McLeary said the future looked bright for his flock of troubadours,. Around the corner may be another show. Like all variety shows it will be a little different. Maybe early next year the QMT stage will light up again with the sounds of laughter and song, McLeary said. But, it might pay, once a few strings are pulled. McLeary added, to watch the media for a possible show even sooner.

