

# Paula struts her stuff for Las Vegas

by Gena Atkinson

After all the dust has settled concerning Paula Abdul's unflattering choice of apparel at the MTV Music Awards and constant jabs at her cheerleader singing voice, one fact still remains, Abdul is a strong performer.

This was evident when Abdul brought her "Under My Spell" tour to the Thomas & Mack Center. The concert resembled a finely choreographed Broadway production with its theatrical dance numbers mingled with the dramatic ef-

fect of its set.

Beginning with Abdul's entrance on a lighted platform that descended slowly from the air while exhaling smoke, Abdul and her entourage of dancers entranced the audience with costumes, set changes and a larger-than-life video screen showing images from Abdul's music videos.

Abdul opened with "Spellbound" fittingly enough, as the audience appeared spellbound throughout the show, climaxing with Abdul's performance of "Blowing Kisses in the Wind." For this number, Abdul sang

atop an escalated stage while the video screen displayed moving clouds in fast motion. To further the effect, two of Abdul's dancers were suspended by invisible cables while dancing romantically in the air.

On the lighter side, Abdul performed "Opposites Attract" with MC Skat Cat, who later performed his single "Skat Cat Strut."

Another added bonus was Las Vegas' own Cleto Escobido, Abdul's saxophonist who is featured in "Vibeology." He performed a dashing solo and Abdul rewarded him by expos-

ing a photo of Cleto's boy-scout days on the video screen, causing giggles from Abdul, as well as the audience.

Abdul's repertoire was filled with popular hits. The concert moved quickly from one chart-buster to another, without skipping a breath. Without a doubt, the popularity of Abdul's music was displayed masterfully through the manipulation of stage production and the familiarity of Abdul's music video-like performance. Although Abdul's vocal talent is somewhat lacking, the concert was a visual delight.

Color Me Badd opened the show for Abdul, exciting the population of young girls in the audience, who screamed on cue at each of the band member's pelvic thrusts. Although it might seem that the group's song "I Wanna Sex You Up" reveals the extent of the band's talent as prima donnas, their performance of "I Ador Mi Amor" shows their true talent, strong vocal harmonizing. With singing talent and performance know-how, Color Me Badd gave an inspired performance.

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## Metallica matches their crowd's enthusiasm

by Ched Whitney

Metallica, the reigning kings of thrash metal, rocked the Thomas & Mack's foundations Jan. 4 for three hours. The band, seemingly not wanting to leave the stage, played three encores for the crowd of over 15,000.

*Metallica* the band's latest release, has sold more than 3 million copies, propelling the band to superstardom.

The band hit their triangular-shaped, 270-degree stage, ripping into their hit "Enter Sandman." To say there wasn't a bad seat in the house was not an exaggeration. With eight strategically-placed video screens surrounding the huge stage, the capacity crowd had a great view of the stage.

Metallica played songs spanning all five of their albums including the ballad "The Unforgiven."

"So did you like that one," singer James Hetfield asked the crowd after the formerly un-Metallica-like song. After hearing their enthusiastic response he said, "Good, so do I."

After their set, the band returned to the stage for multiple encores, ending with a rousing rendition of Queen's "Stone Cold Crazy."



photo by Ched Whitney

Lead singer and rhythm guitarist (and sometimes drummer) James Hetfield led Metallica through a rousing three-hour set.

For bands seem as genuinely enthusiastic about their songs as Metallica does, although their enthusiasm was matched by the crowd's.

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