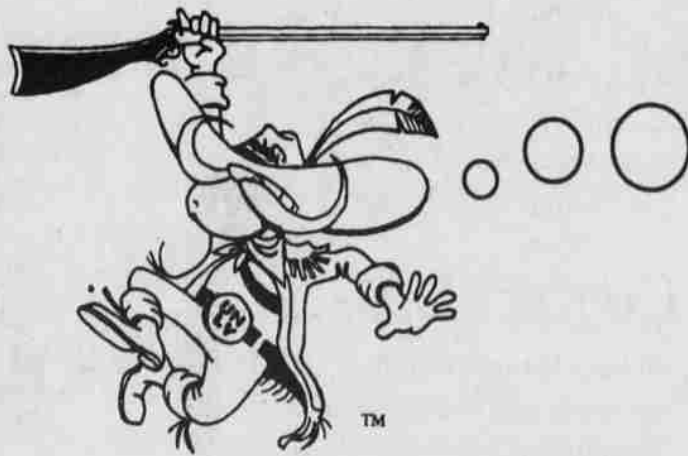


**!variety!**  
REBEL  
YELL



## The world according to Garth (Brooks)

BY BRAD PALMER  
STAFF WRITER

Since playing here nearly three years ago, fans have anticipated the return of Garth Brooks to Las Vegas. In June, tickets finally went on sale, and the dream became reality.

With the help of three local radio stations and thousands of petition signatures, Brooks would come to Las Vegas to perform for one night. But when the concert sold out in just two hours, two more nights were added. Garth Brooks played to sell-out crowds totaling more than 50,000 people over three nights from August 16-18.

Stephanie Davis opened the show on all three nights, giving a powerful debut per-

formance to fans. This was her chance to introduce her music, in the same genre as Mary Chapin Carpenter and Pam Tillis, to a large audience. Her self-titled album, released August 24, was the highlight of her show.

She opened her set with "Look What Love Did (To Me)," which proved to be the crowd-pleaser among Brooks fans.

Yet another was "Learning to Live Again," a song about starting over, which is included on Brooks' album "The Chase." She received a standing ovation then went right into her next song "Good Times." This song features her on the fiddle. Finishing her

set, Davis exclaimed: "The night is still young, so let the good times roll."

Laser lights, smoke, and eerie sounds introduced Brooks and the opening song of the show, "Standing Outside the Fire."

"For the last two nights this place has been rockin', but remember the rule: The final night's goal is to burn this place down," Brooks said.

"Rodeo" highlighted the opening of the 100-minute set with the band in full force as Brooks prepared to perform for over 15,000 people.

"You all came in to raise some hell, and you're in the right place," Brooks said. The tempo of this song sets the



Garth Brooks meets with Target Stores executives after a concert.

## Garth puts traditional country back together with 'In Pieces'

BY BRAD PALMER  
STAFF WRITER

On *In Pieces*, Garth Brooks has linked many styles together including jazz, cajun, blues, and swing. This is a skillfully arranged album and features a variety of artists, including Stephanie Davis on lyrics, Trisha Yearwood on harmony vocals, and Bela Fleck on banjo.

"Standing Outside the Fire" is about the struggles

people face going against the grain. It features a strong guitar interlude which has a Richard Marx flavor.

"Kickin' and Screamin'" claims that sometimes people need to overcome situations with celebration.

"Ain't Goin' Down (Til the Sun Comes Up)" is the anthem for Garth's concert tour which has a style like that of John Mellencamp. Strong vocals, powerful drums, and a clear message highlight every

aspect of this album.

"AHBA (American Honky Tonk Bar Association)" proclaims that people belong to one big family. "We don't reach for handouts, we reach for those who are down," Garth says.

*In Pieces* showcases a variety of musical styles including ballads like "One Night a Day" to "The Cowboy Song," a parable about a cowboy's life adventures.

## Live

Stan Rankin T and Meshack are definitely a must-see for anyone who enjoys a good live reggae performance. Performing classic Bob Marley and several of their own hits, this band really gets the crowd jumpin' to some "irie reggae music."

The vibes flowed as the band 'felt out the crowd' and played whatever filled the dance floor and got the spirits floating. Hits such as "Red Red Wine" and "No Woman Don't Cry" were among the favorites at the Rio Hotel and Casino last Tuesday, as crowds of all ages hit the dance floor to "wine down 'de' place."

Of course, you have to be on the dance floor to experience the full extent of this band's talent. The bass will cause you to vibrate to the point where you will have no choice but to dance; the drums

ing plenty of perfect-toothed sneers. Yet behind his MTV grin, Kip's gutsy virato surpassed the already impressive vocal performance found on their latest release. Kip's mean-and-lean vocals were as precise as his bass playing, down to the vocal effects used live, as they are on the CD.

Filling the empty shoes of ex-Winger-everything man Paul Taylor, replacement John Roth held his own in a big way. "He was the only guitarist (we auditioned) who could play 17," praised Winger-guitarist Reb Beach. The evening saw Roth attack their opener *Blind Revolution*, then swing out a keyboard stand for *Headed for a Heartbreak* (singing non-stop backing vocals).

After a tasty blue-grass solo by Beach (it appeared they knew Garth Brooks was a big hit here), Roth donned a bass

Playing as though there were 50,000 people instead of 500, Winger leaned over the stage to deliver the new stuff ("Junkyard Dog," "Spell That I'm Under") as well as the older hits ("Easy Come, Easy Go," "Can't Get Enough," and for the encore "17"). From start to finish, the vocals were right on the money, and the guitars (and drums) were solid. Both Beach and drummer Rod Morgenstein (formerly of the Dixie Dregs, voted "Best Progressive Drummer" five years running by *Modern Drummer* magazine) played as though they didn't have a care in the world. The way Winger performs live, their only care is to keep themselves humble enough to live with each other, given their extreme individual talent and their close proximity (two factors which have eventually killed more than one good band).

FRIENDS DON'T LET FRIENDS DRIVE DRUNK

see Live p. 12