

ENTERTAINMENT

Songstress excels in performance

Dwana Broussard
Special to Sentinel-Voice
Nancy Wilson, resplendent in a red evening gown, charmed the audience during performances last week at Bally's Jubilee showroom.

Her timeless beauty and classic good looks alone stirred admiration from the crowd. But her voice, inimitable style and strong stage presence — qualities that crafted a distinguished career that is 40 years and going strong — enamored the audience to this lady of song.

Her three-piece combo was virtually a quartet, as she used her voice as an instrument.

In mentioning, "Little Girl Blue," a song she sang as a teenager, she told the audience that the words have so much more meaning now that she understands the lyrics. That wisdom, combined with the experience of performing the world over and her unique talent, made each song come to life.

We got a glimpse of the regal singer's playfulness during a lighthearted exchange with her bass player



John B. Williams on "Don't Mean a Thing." In a rendition of "Let's Stay Together" in which Wilson again played off of the bass



accompaniment, she showed Ellington highlighted her the depth of her sensuality. Her tribute to Duke Ellington highlighted her vocal versatility and offered her the chance to showcase



Nancy Wilson (middle) proved she still has it after 40 years. (Right) Ramsey and his trio (left) also performed.

talent that extends beyond the stage and onto the radio airwaves, where she has a radio show called "Jazz Profiles."

Wilson's tributes to mentors Dinah Washington, Sarah Vaughn and Carmen McCrae were emotional and touching. An acapella delivery of "This Bitter Earth" was equally riveting.

The song stylist graced the crowd with one of her biggest hits, "Guess Who I Saw Today," then provided a fitting nightcap with another hit, "How Glad I Am." Said Olympic gold medal winner Carl Lewis, who was in the audience during Saturday's performance, "Nancy was 'on' tonight."

Special guest Ramsey Lewis was enjoyable, but predictable. A fan of classical music, he played several selections from his work

currently under construction. "Variations on Operatic Themes."

Lewis' adeptly worked the piano, though the tunes were almost too busy and flowery to enjoy on the first take. His spiritual medley was interesting, though only an ear trained to religious music could recognize most of the melodies, whose textures were sapped by too many variations and too few themes. However, the set had it's moments. When Lewis played "Look Back and Remember" by the late Charles Stepney, jazz lovers grew spirited.

His three-piece combo was rounded out nicely by percussionist Ernie Adams and bassist Larry Gray.

The best moments were when the Ramsey Lewis trio had fun. Those moments were too few.

Jungle saga 'Instinct' void of plot, interesting angles

Kam Williams
Special to Sentinel-Voice
Cuba Gooding, Jr. should fire his agent. After winning an Oscar for his, 'Show me the money!' mantra in Jerry Maguire, Cuba's What Dreams May Come topped my 10 Worst List of 1997. Now, Instinct might be the worst of 1999.

Anthony Hopkins should sue his agent for triple damages. Hopkins won an Oscar for his unnerving portrayal of serial killer Hannibal the Cannibal in Silence of the Lambs. You'd think that his people would want to franchise that

Hannibal Lector character into sequel after sequel. Why ruin that possibility by playing an inauthentic ripoff? The question should have at least come up before the script was approved.

In the original, Jodie Foster played an FBI agent thoroughly frightened of this monstrous maniac, yet desperate enough to solve a killing spree to spend days in his presence to plumb the depths of his criminally insane mind.

Instinct, while technically not a sequel to Silence of the Lambs, has been marketed by Touchstone Pictures as

ostensibly just that. But Touchstone is a division of Disney, and Disney simply doesn't make very scary movies.

From the trailer, you'd think that Instinct picks up where Silence of the Lambs left off. It shows Hopkins, again, as a caged and shackled animal, with Gooding in a Foster-ish role as the shrink assigned to get up close and personal with the depraved killer.

Unfortunately, this movie has stepped into another realm entirely. Here's the storyline: Dr. Ethan Powell

(Mr. Hopkins), while a brilliant anthropologist studying primates in the jungles of Rwanda, lost his mind and started snapping people in half like day-old biscuits. Imprisoned for the brutal murders, Dr. Powell has not spoken or cut his hair for years. So, it falls to psychiatrist Dr. Theo Caulder (Mr. Gooding) to unlock the mystery of Powell's tragic degeneration from social scientist to madman.

Even if you could get past the betrayal of this not being Silence of the Lambs II, Instinct is boring and poorly-

scripted with absolutely no tension. Its primary flaw is that the grisly slayings have taken place way before the movie's point of departure. Dr. Caulder's job is merely to psychoanalyze the heavily-

sedated Powell once he is lucid enough to talk about what happened.

We only see the killings in self-serving flashbacks narrated by Powell as a

(See Instinct, Page 9)

Missy Elliott seeking an image revamp

NEW YORK (AP) — Missy "Misdemeanor" Elliott is a devout Baptist who goes to church, but her raps often include raunchy behavior and foul language. The rapper/producer is feeling a little conflicted.

"I go through battles where I'm like, 'Dag, I'm still cussing on albums, and I don't wanna cuss no more,'" she said in July's Spin magazine.

"I'm trying to get it together. I stopped doing a lot of things - I won't drink and I don't smoke. But I don't want people to be like, 'Okay, now she's Reverend Elliott.'"

Elliott's new record, "Da Real World," is her follow to her multi-platinum 1997 debut, "Supa Dupa Fly." Besides her own solo career, she is also a top producer and songwriter.

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