

Junior Walker supplies magic



Jennifer Connolly is Sarah, a teen-ager who gets some help from Hoggle, on her search to save her baby brother, in "Labyrinth."

All the magic in "Motor City Magic" on Wednesday belonged to Junior Walker and his band of four, the All Stars.

This talented, professional, disciplined, great-sounding group, singing into "How Sweet It Is," late in the evening, and crowds got up and danced in the narrow aisles of the pavilion and on the sloped lawn of Meadow Brook Music Festival at Oakland University's Baldwin Pavilion in Rochester Hills.

It's hard to hold still when Junior blows his golden saxophone. Children and their parents got up without being asked when Junior played "Shotgun" and "Home Cookin'." Junior opened with "Peace and Understanding Is Hard to Find," and when he played his way offstage, everyone knew what peace and understanding and coherence was, and no one wanted to let him go.

I wish I could say the same for the rest of "Motown Magic." I kept hearing about what "a great time we're having" and "what a great show this is" and "let's hear it for the band," from Greg Russell and Tom Force, two totally unnecessary disc jockeys who seemed to be sort of emceeing the evening.

ISAY "sort of" because no one really knew what was going on during the overlong, impromptu, one-note concert. The whole evening had the air of a thrown-together party, a Rowan and Martin "Laugh In" marathon, without the controlling hands of Rowan and Martin or the funny, goofy zaniness that made "Laugh In" work. The armies of techie doing their thing was boring.

Six acts is too much. The Fifth Avenue band opened, complaining all the time about the short amount of time it had onstage. The Marvellettes, three pretty, totally unsynchronized ladies, knocked over microphones, lost their shoes and split my ears singing "Watch Out." The Marvellettes cheerfully said they'd had "only 15 minutes rehearsal." It showed.

Lots of people seemed to remember the Contours, who did a parody of Little Richard acrobatics and also said they'd "rehearsed only 15 minutes." Real thunder rolled out of the clouds as if a divine hand was going to let the next musician who said that have it.

Mary Wells, in gold lame and white turban, kicked off her pumps and sang her 1965 hit, "My Guy."



Helen Zucker

Then her husband came onstage in a new-dad outfit (white pants and polo) and showed Mary's 2-week-old baby, Sugar, to the audience. Everyone went wild over Sugar, and the musicians got up to inspect the new baby. I'm still troubled about the infant's eardrums.

High spot of the evening, Mary Wilson of Supremes fame, should have stayed in L.A. where she now lives. It took me 15 minutes to recognize the Beatles ballad, "Life Is Very Short." Wilson's wild tempo made the tune totally unrecognizable, or else I was feeling that life was very long, and this evening was never going to end.

WILSON WAS embarrassing, trying to work the crowd Las Vegas style, sitting on laps, asking personal questions and inviting "four red-hot

guys" onstage to dance with her backup. Wilson had trouble trying to get back onstage. She exuded discomfort, even while doing her 1964 hit, "Baby Love."

Wilson came back to do a finale in white — she did three costume changes, and no tempo changes — and lots of people began drifting toward their cars before the fireworks went off way past midnight.

A man from Detroit sitting next to me said, "I don't remember Motown being like this."

Neither do I. I kept hoping Junior Walker would come back and light up the night.

Helen Zucker has many years experience reviewing pop performers for newspapers and magazines in Michigan, New York and Massachusetts.

the movies

Dan Greenberg

Amazing things happen on journey through labyrinth

"Labyrinth" (PG) falls short of its goals but is, nonetheless, visually rewarding and pleasant enough entertainment.

George Lucas as producer and Steven Spielberg as director hit big with "E.T." as a space-age inversion of the "Wizard of Oz." In "Labyrinth," producer Lucas and director Jim Henson's axis falls in traveling through evil Jareth's maze on the way to Kansas. It's time to let the Land of Oz Tourism Office do its own promotion.

"Labyrinth" has a forced opening as Sarah (Jennifer Connolly), an unpleasant adolescent, tries to avoid baby-sitting with her half-brother, Toby (Toby Froud). Sarah takes refuge in fantasy. Her favorite book is, what else, "Labyrinth." She also has an inordinate affection for stuffed animals.

The only reason Sarah's stepmother (Shelley Long) fits the "evil" stereotype is that cinematographer Alex Thompson uses wide-angle lenses. Otherwise, she appears normal — rather nice, in fact. Father (Christopher Malcolm) is just ineffectually there. Seemingly in desperation, second-tier Jerry Jones developed this opening as a means of propelling Sarah into the labyrinth.

AFTER HER parents leave, in a fit of pique, Sarah wishes the goblin would take her brother Toby, who cries a lot. "Ask and thou shalt receive." The evil wizard, Jareth, played by David Bowie, appears and that's it for the kid, unless Sarah can solve the labyrinth in 13 hours.

Suddenly, our petulant adolescent summons up hidden maturity and begins her rescue effort. Actually, once she gets going, her maturation from youth to adult is pretty well-handled. Throughout her journey, Jareth offers to immobilize her in his special kind of eternal adolescence.

Adolescence is a very pleasant trip between childhood and adulthood but most of us realize, sooner or later, that we have to complete the rites of passage and function effectively in society. One of the problems with rock music is that much of its lyrics, many of its practitioners and a lot of its devotees continually partake of unreal, adolescent urges.

Certainly Bowie as the Evil Wizard reflects rock culture's adolescent sense of freedom and irresponsibility. Unfortunately, Bowie has neither the leering evil of a truly threatening wizard nor the affectionate and well-intentioned persona of Frank Morgan. He's just there and it's very hard to fear his threats or hear his lyrics.

In spite of her limited acting ability, it is quite obvious that Sarah will reject Jareth's offers of escape into eternal adolescence, will save Toby and go home. Connolly is extremely pretty, truly looks like a 15 year old — which is rare in films these days and exhibits an emotionless, wooden and unrefined manner that belies her supposed danger.

ONE EXCEPTION, at a beautifully designed fantasy ball, Bowie teases effectively at Sarah while she reacts to the tensions inherent in sexual awakening, part of her maturation. Unfortunately, for the most part, there is no dramatic tension between these two principals.

Fortunately, however, the film is filled with Muppet-maker Henson's intriguing and imaginative characters. Much like Dorothy's trip through Oz, Sarah encounters, befriends and escapes a wide variety of creatures whose various execution represent extremely sophisticated puppetry and electronics.

Sir Didymus, a Knight of the Round Table, in the very best sense of the term, is the most appealing and the most original. Looking somewhat like a feisty fox terrier in medieval regalia, Didymus rides around on his faithful steed — what appears to be an English Sheep Dog.

No prizes for originality, however, for Ludo, a giant and gentle beast who is able to summon rocks. As helpful as that might be to Sarah as she confronts Jareth and the inhabitants of Goblin City, Ludo is overly reminiscent of the Cowardly Lion.

Another shortcoming of "Labyrinth" is the difficulty understanding the puppets, with their various cockney dialects. Whether it is pronunciation or some technical audio matter, the net result is the audience's loss.

THE SAME PROBLEM afflicts the music. Songs and their lyrics are supposed to advance the storyline while they amuse and entertain. Combining British dialects with the usual difficulty in comprehending rock music lyrics shortchanges the audience. Surprisingly, there are only five songs, all written, produced and performed by David Bowie. While Bowie's name may propel them up the charts, it's doubtful they'll ever find their way over the rainbow.

The film ends on as hokey a note as it began, but, in spite of all these complaints, "Labyrinth" is a significant motion picture, an extremely rewarding visual experience. Children will enjoy the puppets, adolescents will appreciate Bowie and everyone can enjoy the rhetorical sophistication and beauty of Goblin City, Jareth's castle and all the labyrinth's inhabitants.

upcoming things to do

- **TRAIN TRIPS**
Called "So Long 611," two one-day train excursions originating in Detroit depart Saturday-Sunday, July 26-27, from Allen Park. Destination of the steam train trips is Ft. Wayne, Ind. Special bus service to the train is available from several locations in Detroit's northern suburbs (including Birmingham, where the bus leaves at 6:45 a.m.). For more information, call 264-4418, 399-7963 or 455-4455.
- **SUMMER TOURS**
Summer tour hours continue through Sunday, Aug. 31, at Meadow Brook Hall. The 100-room historic mansion, at Oakland University in Rochester Hills. Tours also are available, this summer for the first time, at Sunset Terrace, the home built for the Wilsons' "sunset" years.
- For more information, call 370-3140.
- **FOLK, BLUEGRASS**
The 10th annual Folk and Bluegrass Festival will be held from 1-9 p.m. Sunday, July 27, at Northville's Ford Field. Proceeds from the event will help to fight Huntington's Disease. The program includes Bobby Lewis, Mike Irish, Dave Everette and Teresa Smith, Hot Grass, Roy McElmish and the Sunnysiders, Red Happy String Band, Mustards Retreat, Phoenix, Neil Woodward, Footloose, Song Sisters, Children's Pool, and Joe McKinney and North-South Connection. Seating is all on the lawn. Admission is a minimum donation of \$5 for adults, \$2 for seniors, \$1 for children under 12 years of age; infants held in arms are free.

- **NEW ALBUM**
"Shadows," a new album by Atanas, has been released by Freeway Records. Lead singer and composer Atanas is really 22-year-old Mike Nitch of Bloomfield Hills. He wrote nearly all the music and lyrics for "Shadows," his first album, which is available at area record stores.
- **TICKET PACKAGES**
The Oakland University Center for the Arts is offering four separate ticket packages for its 1986-87 Center Stage Series. Concerts are grouped by area of interest: classical music, theater, dance and popular music. Theater highlights include productions of "Sweeney Todd, the Demon Barber of Fleet Street" and "Amadeus." The Detroit Concert Band will appear on the popular music series. For more information call 370-3013 from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. weekdays.

DINING AND ENTERTAINMENT GUIDE

ON THE TOWN

Your Place or Ours

Catering

Allow our many years of experience and quality service to add that special touch to your next function. We will serve from the moderate to the exquisite. We prepare, deliver and serve.

- Garden Parties
- Graduation
- Open House
- Carry out Service

Kingsley Inn

WOODWARD AT LONG LAKE ROAD
ROCHESTER HILLS 644-1400

crabbie joe's
22041 MICHIGAN AVE.
DEARBORN, MI 48124
(313) 562-1080

CRABBIE JOE'S CELEBRATES 10th Anniversary
Month of July
— MONDAY & TUESDAY DINNER SPECIALS —
featuring
Strolling Musicians

MONDAY
Seafood Platter \$11.95
for Two
includes salad & hot beverage

TUESDAY
Live Maine Lobster \$13.95
includes salad, choice of potato
or corn on the cob & hot bowl of soup

AND OTHER GREAT SPECIALS
*no discounts by approval

ATLANTIC CITY
USAIR
MONDAY TO WEDNESDAY
BEGINS JULY 14, 1986

FROM **\$239**
AIR-HOTEL-TRANSFERS
ADVANCED BOOKING REQUIRED

HAWAII
American Airlines
ONE WEEK
WAIKIKI SAND VILLA
FROM **\$559**
AIR-HOTEL-TRANSFERS
ADVANCED BOOKING REQUIRED

Funflight Vacations
557-2260

Caceques
CLAMBAKE
Wednesdays — 6 PM to 10 PM

A live Maine Lobster
Plus, all you can eat:
mouth-watering East Coast specialties
prepared by our skillful chefs

Shrimp • Crab Legs • Clams • Mussels
Oysters • Clam Chowder
Barbecued Chicken & Ribs
And
Redskin potatoes, corn-on-the-cob,
a delicious variety of salads,
fresh fruits & assorted cheeses.

Only **\$19.95** per person
Additional lobster
or New York Strip \$1.00

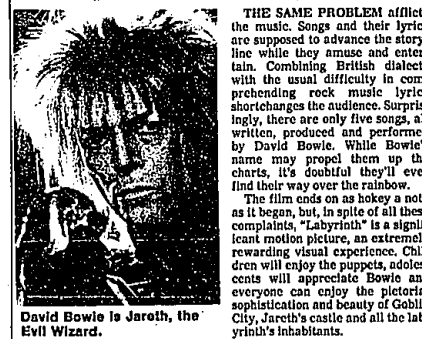
Call 642-1173 for reservations
30100 Telegraph Road (N. of 12 Mile)

THRIFTY TUESDAY
MIXED DRINKS
DRAFT BEER & WINE
\$1.50 ALL DAY

Begins at Lunch: 1:00 p.m.
until closing at 2:00 a.m.

JOVAN
DANCING & ENTERTAINMENT
COME PARTY WITH US!

642-2430
30100 Telegraph Rd. (N. of 12 Mile)



David Bowie is Jareth, the Evil Wizard.