

STREET SCENE

The Observer & Eccentric® Newspapers

Monday, June 18, 1990 O&E

★ 10

Leather, lace and Madonna

By Larry O'Connor
staff writer

When the Material Girl strolls into town, the Madonna wannabes, hopebees and no-way-in-hell will-everbes are out in full force.

The Palace of Auburn Hills was no exception. While Madonna performed two sold-out shows, the entrance to the arena often resembled an Academy Awards setting.

One limousine after another would pull up and spill out some leather- and lace-clad gang of girls screeching or cooling with their dates.

This Madonna thing... just don't understand the hysteria. Was it this way when Elvis rolled in? Or the Beatles?

In one sense, it probably was. There are fans, then there are fans.

Outside the Palace stood Greg Gostanian, a rotund figure in a black T-shirt with a snapshot of Madonna with him in the background pinned to his chest.

Gostanian has been following the singer since 1987. He finds out her aliases at hotels in different cities, takes pictures with his Instamatic camera of her jogging with her bodyguard and claims that one time he actually ate next to her.

"I've gone as far as any fan will go," said Gostanian, who lives in Forest Hills, N.Y. "I've met a lot of stars like Michael Jackson. They'll pose for you. She's so different. She won't pose. As soon as you put down the camera, though, she'll stick out her tongue. It's a challenge."

THEN THERE'S Kelly Hagemann, dressed in black bustier, looking like a chip off the old Madonna. She traveled all the way from St. Louis, Mo., for the show. Why?

"It's her hometown," she said. Yeh, well Elvis was from Tupelo, Miss. Don't see any chartered tours down there, do you?

Face it, though. Love her or hate her, Madonna is a pop icon. She sets the standard of fashion. She tells the whole world what to sing.

Curiously brought us there; boredom sent us home. Sorry, but we weren't impressed or shocked.

C'mon. Madonna grabbing her crotch? Big deal. Just watch baseball on TV and you can see a short-stop checking his package an average of three times every at-bat.

Madonna's dance moves? Janet Jackson or Paula Abdul can do pirouettes around her.

Her singing? Some people were heard to murmur afterward that they thought she was lip-synching a couple of her songs.

Madonna is purely a creation of the corporate music industry,

which controls radio and video outlets.

The Madonna bad-girl image machine feeds off its own hype... her Pepsi ad being pulled from TV (burp). Her escaping arrest in Toronto after her risqué live set (belch).

BUT THINK about it. Is Madonna really a menace to moral minds? Hardly. Jim Morrison of the Doors pulled his pants down on-stage; Iggy Pop used to spit on his audience. Oh, they're males, you say. Madonna is a female being lewd. What was Janis Joplin, a nun?

Madonna is pure pabulum for the white, middle-class set. Her act seldom challenges the mind or heart.

Nonetheless, to her legion of fans Madonna has somehow become a symbol for the liberation of female sexuality with her Boy Toy fashions.

She gives license to some of her women devotees to dress and act like they should be shooting marbles in the alley (one woman arrived at the Palace wearing a jacket with only a red, see-through bra underneath) for 2½ hours. When it's over, though, one would suspect they return to their normal, mundane lives as office workers, church secretaries and waitresses.

On stage, Madonna exudes the warmth of a polar bear with frostbite. Seldom does she interact with the audience; only the occasional gum-chewing argot such as "Detroit girls know how to fight" is heard.

AT HER best, she is reminiscent of the girl at summer camp who gave you a wink and invited you behind the tree for a quick kiss -- and who then stomped on your heart with a golf shoe.

Her songs speak of love and relationships, yet her actions and her dominatrix appearance depict a woman flexing her muscles and putting men in their place.

Her 18-song performance was a visual assault, at times in itself very entertaining. An elaborate stage setup masks a performer who is not a great singer or a great dancer but good enough to release a record every 12 months.

And to keep the Greg Gostanians following her along the way.

Madonna, the hometown girl who's made it in music, has caused more than her fair share of stir with her use of bustiers as costumes for her stage acts.



JERRY ZOLYNSKY/staff photographer

Mental Floss

by JUDGE NILSSON

DT: Just a 'comic'

By Gerald Frawley
staff writer

There have been others who have waged one-man wars on crime.

Super-powered do-gooders with the ability to leap tall buildings in a single bound, nearly psychotic dark knights driven by a need for vengeance, human arachnids with great powers and correspondingly great responsibilities.

But none like Dick Tracy -- an ordinary man doing an ordinary job for ordinary pay who just happens to be the second most famous detective in the world, bowing only to Sherlock Holmes in popularity and longevity.

Dick Tracy was, is, and always will be a cop. No super powers, just dedication. Unwaveringly honest, unswervingly dedicated, totally incorruptible -- but still human and still someone people can relate to.



PETER SOREL

Warren Beatty, with 11 Oscar nominations to his credit, is looking to score as director, producer and star of "Dick Tracy."

Please turn to Page 6

