

Rock and roll Rush opens Louis Arena

The Joe Louis Arena had its first taste of rock and roll last week with the Canadian trio Rush.

The new arena looks like a cross between Cobo Hall and the Pontiac Silverdome and holds 21,000 compared to Cobo's mere 12,000.

Though the new arena was built mainly for hockey and is constantly criticized for its quick construction and steep stairs, it still does the job for concerts. Sound reproduction is almost identical to that of Cobo Hall.

Capitol recording group Max Webster actually was the first band to play the arena. The band was the opening act that night.

The ticket holders, however, were there to see Rush — bassist and vocalist Geddy Lee, guitarist Alex Lifeson and drummer Neil Peart. Rush is on tour promoting its seventh studio album, "Permanent Waves."

LEE'S UNIQUELY high vocals and Peart's medieval and science fiction-inspired lyrics, along with the acoustic beauty and electric shrills of Lifeson's

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guitar, are the band's trademarks.

New songs, such as "Jacob's Ladder," which sounds very much like "Hemispheres" from the band's previous album, and its current single "The Spirit of Radio" were played. Older songs such as "Closer to the Heart" and "Xanadu" from its fifth studio album "A Farewell to Kings" also were played.

Rush took the audience on a familiar journey to the year "2112" and through the world of "Cygnus X-1."

Rush is famous for writing concept albums (albums that tell a story). On its current offering, the song "Natural Science" carries the weight of three parts: "Tide Pools," "Hyperspace" and "Permanent Waves."

Peart, who was buried (as usual) in drums and percussion equipment, machine-gunned his way through a fantastic solo.



At Comedy Castle

"Make Me Laugh's" Bob Saget returns to the Comedy Castle on Thursday-Saturday. Showtimes are 9 p.m. Thursday and 8:30 and 11 p.m. Friday and Saturday at Friday's restaurant, Pine Lake Mall on Orchard Lake Road, West Bloomfield. Saget, with ad lib and musical parodies, has performed at the L.A. Comedy Store and New York's Carnegie Hall. The appearance by Fred Smoot, originally scheduled for the Comedy Castle this weekend, has been canceled. For further information, call 831-3252.

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'Sweet Charity' cast does well

By GAY ZIEGER

review

The cast free-floated its way through Friday night's performance of Neil Simon's "Sweet Charity" at the Sheraton Dinner Theatre.

There wasn't a single hitch, not one "oh, no" moment of forgotten lines, awkward moments, or clumsy breaking down of sets.

This was no mean feat, considering the frequent costume changes and 18 scene shifts.

Due to the adroit direction of Margie Monross, attention was diverted from scenery rearrangements by having the actors play off-stage at crucial moments.

This careful orchestration gave the production a polished quality that was heightened by the competence of the performers.

The play, which runs Fridays and Saturdays through April 5, revolves around Charity Hope Valentine, a dance hall hostess who can't check her generous impulses.

Unfortunately, she has a penchant for ferreting out mendacious men. One of the other ladies in what they call the "Rent-the-Body Business," says that she "runs her heart like a hotel."

The resultant complications are predictable. She winds up in a lake, on one occasion, with her pocketbook missing.

IN THE LEAD ROLE, Becky MacIntyre is credible and lovable. She throws her body into her acting and radiates aura of energy.

Her interpretation reveals her understanding of the seriocomic nature of the work. The sad, poignant moments

are tempered by a kind of lightheartedness.

It takes talent to juggle these contradictory feelings, and Ms. MacIntyre has it.

One of her adventures leads her figuratively into the arms of Joe Dabbs, as the ultra-sophisticated matinee idol, Vittorio Vidale. Dabbs' overacting and dramatic flair were right on target.

He was grandiloquent — and hilarious. In a posh restaurant, he brushes aside the waiter with a patronizing order of "Chateaubriand." Ms. MacIntyre adds: "Trim the fat."

The matching of these two was delicious. Kat La Rose was equally theatrical and effective as his romantic counterpart.

As the would-be husband, Duane Shaw was properly proper and nicely nervous, especially when reacting to being trapped in an elevator. The latter involvement leads us to the Rhythm of Life. Church, complete with flower children, bongos, and Big Daddy, played by Roger Slee. The scope of that musical number was grand, and slightly amazing considering the minuscule stage, although, throughout, much of the strength of the performance rested in turning the entire room into a performing place.

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