

Art

Apparently creative people do live in Potsdam

To the Editor:

We as creative women would like to comment on Dan Stetson's article "Art - Yes Creative Man Lives In Potsdam" in the February third issue of the Racquette.

Why did Mr. Stetson need reassurance that Potsdam students are "capable of serious endeavor?"

We feel that Mr. Stetson should broaden his personal understanding and direct contact with all the art studios and the students working within them before he openly comments on the department. Perhaps

after experiencing the total studio activity his doubts will be assuaged.

It is our observation that the prevailing attitude on campus towards the art department is negative, concerning the amount of serious work undertaken. Mr. Stetson only reinforces this negative attitude by subtly suggesting that the quality is in question. Within his closing comment Mr. Stetson refers to the "visual success" of the show. There is more to art than visual stimulation. There always is intellectual and spiritual motivation behind all works of art. It is

wrong to observe the works in Brainerd Hall with expectations of viewing great art. We are students of art, not professionals, and we are learning.

The title of Mr. Stetson's article pertains to the student art show, however the bulk of the article discussed the politics of the credit hour rearrangement. The credit rearrangement is an important topic for discussion but perhaps this should be dealt with in a separate article.

Kathy Dobbs
Elizabeth L. Cook

Entertainment

Blue Oyster Cult concert - it was only good

by Martin Slavin.

Last Tuesday night Potsdam was treated to one of the finest hard rock concerts that the North Country has seen for quite some time. The only problem was that you would never have known it, had you observed the audience. Blue Oyster Cult, the featured band, put on one of the most intelligent shows that has blessed the rock world over the last several years. Still, with all this going for the concert, the show itself was only good. That is the problem with most concerts in Potsdam, they barely go over the level of mediocrity.

My second point for this argument is the Hot Tuna debacle of two years ago. My friend and I had a running argument as to the quality of this band. Having only seen them once, here in Potsdam, I thought they were overly loud and extremely obnoxious. My friend disagreed with me. He had seen them about two weeks later at a midnight show at the Paladium (then it was the Academy of Music) in New York and said that they were great. He said it was like shades of the original Air Plane. This debate raged between the two of us for most of the summer. Eventually he convinced me to give the band another chance and to go see them again. I went and Hot Tuna was truly in magnificent form.

The whole thing became painfully clear later that fall. Over the summer, I had the pleasure of seeing Dave Mason in a concert. Needless to say, it was an enjoyable show that I readily got into. When I got back to school in the fall, I had heard that Dave Mason was scheduled to perform here in Potsdam. I was looking forward to this concert with great anticipation.

This concert turned out to be the most disappointing concert that I went to in my four years in this arctic tundra. Not only was the band half as good as they were in New York over the summer, you could tell from the performance that the band was only going through the motions to fill an open date and to collect a quick paycheck. The ignorant Potsdam audience which does not know any better, thought that the concert was great. The problem is compounded by a vain booking chairman who hates to read in print an honest review of a half-hearted concert.

And that folks is the crux of the problem, the Potsdam audience. This leads me to wonder if it is a problem of ignorance where they don't know any better, or it is a problem of stupidity, where because of hang-ups they are too inhibited to do something about it.

Now what do I mean by being inhibited? Let me give you several examples of uninhibited behavior at concerts. In the summer of 1975, the Beach Boys played at Madison Square Garden in New York, The



Blue Oyster Cult who played in Potsdam -
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audience was dancing so much that the New York Times reported the next day that the mezzanine at the Garden was shaking up to three inches in either direction. I went to see the Grateful Dead in Roosevelt Stadium in Jersey City. The Dead played for over six hours and the audience boogied with the band for the whole time.

You see concerts are a participation sport. The bands really enjoy playing for a crowd that moves to every note and jumps at every beat. Gary Duncan who is the lead guitarist in Quicksilver, remarked after last years concert that this was the worst audience that he has ever played for. It was, by no surprise a poor concert. Several weeks later I was glancing through Walrus, a publication for progressive rock radio that contains short reviews of concerts as well as albums, I saw a review of Quicksilver at a club on Long Island where the band put on an excellent show. The Review was the Music Director at WLIR-FM so I imagine he knows something about good shows and bad shows. The thing about the review was the spot where the reviewer is asked to rate the audience reaction. This was simply listed as ecstatic.

A lively audience makes for a better show. In almost every case, when I viewed a concert in any

other area than Potsdam, I almost always saw a better show. The notes were the same, the bands had the same personnel. Many were even in college towns similar to Potsdam. The big difference was the level of audience participation. In Potsdam you are lucky to even get the crowd to clap along with the band when they ask for you to do so.

The Blue Oyster Cult concert was the epitome of my frustration with the concert audiences in this town. You had all the elements for a great show, one that would have rated up there at least in my mind with some of the great concerts that I have seen. The band was cooking, they had a great light show, but something was still missing, and active audience. They didn't even bother to stand up til the last song in the set. And when they did get up they looked bored and people just stood there with their hands on their putzes.

Imagine if you were in the position of a band and you saw the audience just sitting there, you'd be fairly frustrated. Instead of yelling to the person in front of you who is dancing for him to sit down, why not stand up and join him. You might even enjoy it. Who knows the band may even put on a better show.

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