

# Trower's audience apathetic, confused

By Douglas Weil

Following the break-up of the English band Procol Harum, the group's lead guitarist Robin Trower presented his first solo effort, *Twice Removed from Yesterday*.

Though Trower played an integral role

in the success of Procol Harum (producing such hits as "Conquistador," "A Whiter Shade of Pale," "Simple Sister" and "A Salty Dog"), his efforts on his first solo album brought him only widespread anonymity.

However, in 1974 Trower released his

second LP since the highly acclaimed *Bridge of Sighs*. Any thought that Trower would remain on the music scene as just another faceless performer quickly was cast aside.

*Bridge of Sighs* brought Trower to the forefront in an overcrowded mishmash of heavy metal guitarists. Trower and associates Saturday presented nearly one and one-half hours of this guitar exhibition which many have likened to Jimi Hendrix.

The concert in Pershing Municipal Auditorium provided a fair amount of excitement as Trower and band played such tunes as "Lady Lover," "Day of the Eagle," "Bridge of Sighs" and "Caledonia."

### Soggy cornflakes

Most of the performance was well presented, although "Day of the Eagle" sounded like a turntable with a bad case of wow and flutters, and James Dewar's vocals sounded like they were being monitored through a bowl of soggy cornflakes.

Trower may have been at his best when he played a more laid-back bluesy style characteristic of some of his lesser known material.

The crowd reaction to Trower presented some interesting ideas. Trower is quite obviously one of the more accomplished guitarists on the music scene today. Keeping this in mind, why is it that Trower's performance was greeted in a largely lukewarm fashion?

Could it be that it's not enough to be proficient anymore?

A good example of the proficient artist would be to take a look back at the career of Rick Wakeman. Wakeman was one of the pioneers in the production of music using various sound-bending instruments, such as the synthesizer.

### Hailed as master

Wakeman was hailed as The Most Worshipful Grand Master of the Keyboards.

But what made Wakeman so good? Certainly not his material, which one might classify as sterile, narrative, conceptive disasters.

Still, he met with a measure of success—at least for a while.

But Wakeman and so many others find themselves to be stars without audience just two years after the beginning of this

fascination with proficiency and innovation.

No, it's not enough to be innovative and proficient. Perhaps all this talk about rock music as an art form has made audiences think they are more sophisticated than they really are, and, as a result, they're not sure what they really like.

Robin Trower put on an extremely good show with only minor flaws. It's too bad that only a small portion of the crowd could be concerned enough to show appreciation. Apathy and confusion have reached the concert hall and the results are lifeless crowds and unmotivated performers.

Although this problem isn't perfectly clear and its discussion could run several pages, it's obvious that whatever most of the crowd was looking for, the back-up band Moxy didn't provide it.

Moxy was introduced by a recorded orchestral intro and narration that warned something to the effect that he who is loudest is the first to be heard. They may have been the first and they may have been the loudest, but that doesn't necessarily mean anyone listened.

But then again, Moxy, which is sort of a refined Bachman-Turner Overdrive, didn't give anyone much reason for listening. Suffice it to say that halfway through Moxy's set the concession stands really cleaned up.

## 'Distant Thunder' is UPC selection

A 1973 India film, entitled *Distant Thunder*, will be shown in the Union Program Council's Foreign Film Series at 7 and 9 tonight and Tuesday.

The film was written and directed by Satyajit Ray, who generally is acknowledged as the greatest of the Indian filmmakers.

Set in a small Bengali village during World War II, the film explores the effects of a devastating famine that overtakes the village.

*London Times* critic David Robinson said: "Ray's unequalled gift is to give total sense of a way of life which is strange and remote and contained, yet to discover in it the qualities that are universal..."

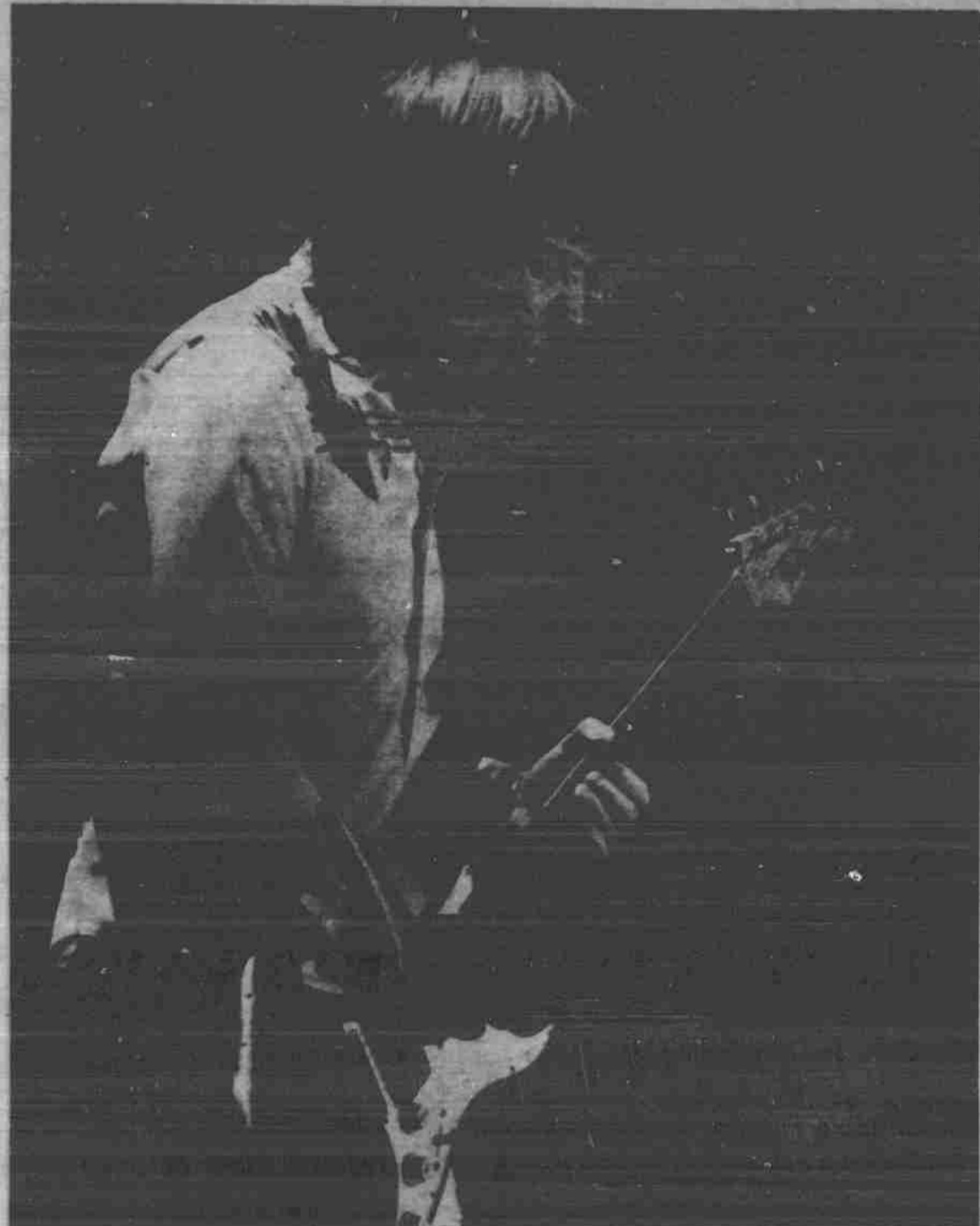


Photo by Ted Kirk

Robin Trower probably is one of the most accomplished guitarists on the music scene today, but his Pershing audience Saturday forgot something... appreciation.

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