



Photo courtesy of Columbia Records

## Sensitive but defiant Costello could fill 'The King's' shoes

By Jeff Taebel

While driving down North Avenue on Chicago's west side this summer, I heard an FM jock relate the story of an interesting phone call he had received. A listener called in and, referring to the recent passing of Elvis Presley, asked him, "What's all this talk about 'The King' being dead? 'The King' is not dead!" To this, the DJ replied, "I couldn't agree with you more, 'The King' isn't dead, because now 'The King' is this man..."

### album review

The DJ then proceeded to play a tape excerpt from Elvis Costello's debut album, *My Aim Is True*. The song we heard is called "Miracle Man" and from listening to it, one immediately can see that "this man" is a recording artist to be reckoned with. The song opens with some rough-edged guitar and has a dynamite chorus "What I'm trying to tell you is there's always somebody whose gonna do it better than I can/Don't ya think that I know that walkin' on the water don't make me a miracle man!"

So, here we have a man named Elvis Costello, pictured in yellow and orange, defiantly posing for his debut album cover, looking for all the world like Buddy Holly on angel dust. What is the public to think?

Unfortunately, some music writers already have written him off as another new wave or punk rocker, presumably because of Costello's working-class London background and his rude and raucous musical style.

This categorization is grossly unfair. For starters, Costello's lyrics show a certain sensitivity that lifts his songs well above the "I want my boot in your face" mentality of Johnny Rotten and others like him. Also, his songwriting abilities seem to exceed those of any of the punk rockers we have heard from either side of the Atlantic.

Costello's band is tight and really can rock when they want to. Costello sings with a vengeance, sounding somewhat

like a younger, angrier Bruce Springsteen. His songs are short, to the point and his lyrics range from witty to frightening.

Side one of *My Aim Is True* contains some minor rock masterpieces, one of them being the previously mentioned "Miracle Man." Another highlight of the side is the hard-rocking "Blame It On Cain," which has a searing guitar lead and a powerful chorus.

Costello has an uncanny knack for writing numbers that have eternally hummable melodies and captivating rhythms, exemplified by "No Dancing," "Sneaky Feelings," and "Welcome To The World In A Week," which also are on side one. However, the finest moments on the side (and on the album, for that matter) are provided by "Alison," a tune which could revolutionize songs about unrequited love.

Instead of sitting around moping about his bad luck, as most songwriters seem content to do, Costello takes immediate action, warning the girl who is the object of his affection: "sometimes I wish I could stop you from talking/when I hear the silly things that you say/I think somebody better put out the big light/'cause I can't stand to see you this way/Alison, I know this world is killing you/Oh, Alison, my aim is true!"

Side two doesn't slow down much. It opens with a rather lush number called "The Angels Want To Wear My Red Shoes." It also contains a breakneck rocker entitled "Mystery Dance" and a rather frightening song called "I'm Not Angry," which is reminiscent of some of the "sci-fi" rock of the mid-Sixties.

The album closes with a social comment piece called "Waiting For The End Of The World" in which Costello lashes out at various segments of Western culture: "The legendary hitchhiker/thinks he knows where it's at/says now he wants to go to Spain/or someplace like that."

With this impressive album under his belt, Costello should expect his popularity in the U.S. to increase immensely. The album combined with a performance on *Saturday Night Live* and a feature story in *Time* magazine, should guarantee a quick rise to stardom.

Each of the little black squares which checkerboard the album cover contain a letter, and when put together, they spell out "Elvis is King" across the jacket. I'm not going to argue. Long may he reign!

## arts and entertainment

### 'Jesus Christ Superstar' opera to grace Lincoln stage

By Charlie Krig

*Jesus Christ Superstar*, the rock opera by Tim Rice and Andrew Lloyd Webber, opens Fri., Feb. 17 at the Lincoln Community Playhouse.

The play is based upon the New Testament of the Bible with the plot centering on Christ's last days on earth. The show originally was produced in London but later ran on Broadway. The stage version on both sides of the Atlantic were tremendous hits as was the motion picture rendition.

The record soundtrack of the original theatrical production in London is one of the best-selling British albums of all time and the score includes numbers such as "I Don't Know How To Love Him," "Superstar," and "Hosanna".

The Playhouse is one of the first area community theaters to produce *Jesus Christ Superstar*. Playhouse Managing Director John R. Wilson said the chance to produce the show is a recent development.

"Five years ago, if anyone had suggested that we produce *Superstar*, he or she would have been bombarded with 50 reasons why we couldn't do that show," he said. "But the successful experiences of shows like *Godspell* and *The Me Nobody Knows*, we know that we can do them (rock musicals) well and the audiences and cast love every minute of it."

The musical features a combined cast, choir, chorus, dance company and orchestra of over 65 people. The cast includes Glenn Prettyman as Jesus, Janne Cooper as Mary Magdalene, Frank Smith as Judas, Paul Tranisi as Pilate, Tom Farrell as Herod, Todd Berger as Caiaphas, David Shellner as Simon, Ken Love as Annas and Patrick Brimm as Peter.

Wilson is director of the production, Charles Kuba is music director and Bill Munson is assistant music director. Choreography is by Karen McWilliams, scenic design is by Don Yanik, lighting is by Doug Pipan and all costumes are designed by Diane Knust and Don Yanik. Carol

Svoboda is the assistant to the director.

*Jesus Christ Superstar* is produced through cooperation with Music Theatre International. Carol McVey, administrative assistant at the Playhouse, said the play will run Feb. 17-19 and 24-26 and March 3-5 and 10-12 with nightly performances

at 8. Matinees have been scheduled for 2 p.m. on Feb. 26 and March 5

McVey suggested that reservations be made early because the Playhouse musicals usually have full houses. Reservations may be made by calling the Playhouse box office at 489-9608.

### Instrumentalists, vocal duets are featured in free recitals

The UNL School of Music is sponsoring four student recitals today featuring two senior instrumentalists and two junior vocalists.

Beth Teller will play four selections on the flute. Her choices are *Sonata for Piano and Flute, Op. 35* by Conradin Kreutzer, *Joueurs de Flute, Op. 27, No. 1 and 2* by Albert Roussel, *Music for Mother Bear* by Donald Erb and *Suite for Flute and Jazz Piano* by Claude Bolling.

Teller's recital will start at 3:30 p.m. in the Choral Room of Westbrook Music Building. Her accompanists will be Robert Rhein and Jeff Agler on piano, Martha Obrecht on bass and Dell Smith on drums.

The other three performers will present their recitals in Sheldon Art Gallery auditorium. Their performances also will

begin at 3:30 p.m.

Two sopranos, Laurie Brenner and Joyce Mahon, will sing a dozen songs in an assortment of solos and duets. Their selections are *Laudamus te* by Vivaldi, *Deh vieni non tardar* and *L'Ainero* by Mozart, *Morgen* by Strauss, *Liebst du um Schonheit* by Mahler, *Die Nachtrigall* by Berg, *Madehenlieder* by Brahms, *Weep you no more* by Quilter, *When I bring to you* by Carpenter, *Walk Slowly* by Hageman and *Pretty Ring Time* by Warlock.

Kathy Knebel will play the piano for the women.

The last performer will be Mike Brownson. The program for his trumpet recital was not available at press time.

All of the recitals are free and open to the public.

### Sun has risen on KZUM

KZUM, the educational, listener-sponsored, community-access FM radio station supported by Sunrise Communications, is officially on the air.

On Friday, Feb. 10, the Federal Communications Commission granted authority for KZUM to begin broadcasting radio programs at frequency 89.5 on the FM band. The station started broadcasting Tuesday and programs will run daily this week from 4 p.m. to 2 a.m. The regular program schedule will begin at sunrise Saturday, Feb. 18.

Sunrise Communications began its fight for broadcast authorization in spring 1974. Then the tax-exempt, non-profit corporation applied for a permit to build the

station. The application was delayed because WOWT-TV (Channel 6 in Omaha) filed a petition claiming the KZUM signal would interfere with the WOWT signal.

The FCC later granted a construction permit so the station could go on the air to perform equipment tests and determine the actual interference. The tests were conducted from late December 1977 through late January 1978 with only a few cases of interference reported, according to a Sunrise Communications member.

WOWT now has dropped its petition but program tests still will run through Friday night.

### Tryouts soon for Simon play

Audition dates are set for the next Lincoln Community Playhouse main stage production, *The Good Doctor* by Neil Simon. The tryouts have been set for Feb. 20 and 21 at 7:30 p.m. at the Playhouse, 2500 So. 56th St.

The lead role will be played by John R. Wilson, the Playhouse managing director,

in his last appearance on its stage. Other parts are available for adult men and women and one young man aged 17 through 22 years old.

Play production dates will be from March 25 to April 16 and scripts are available at the Playhouse box office. Call the Playhouse at 489-9608 for more information.