

# Bromberg worth money at show

By Michael Zangari

If there were any justice in the world, most of the chart-busters now touring would be hosing off the sidewalks in front of David Bromberg concerts.

There is always an element of surprise in a review when the reviewer exclaims, after much gasping and clawing for words, that the band was actually having fun during the show. Let's face it, any more competence is an expected component in inflated ticket prices, but pinache or the feeling that the band really worked to all its extremes is as rare as Republican supporters of John Anderson.

## concert review

Sitting in a time warp after the first set, all this was running through my head. Bromberg's opening band, the Fourth Wall of Sound, had just left the stage to generous applause and the house lights were brought quickly up. I was sipping a \$1.50 beer (this being an over-nineteen concert) and trying to recover from the set. They were a vintage 1964 hoot band with varying shades of Dan Hicks and his Hot Licks, complete with acoustic base and woman fiddle player. Bromberg must have picked them up out of a San Francisco bar on his way to his bus.

After last year's mythical concert, expectations were high. The Music Hall was less than sold out, but the fans that were there proved to be more than a match for Bromberg. They broke into random standing ovations after most songs, and Bromberg's comment that it was a "nice little room" seemed to carry throughout his set.

He opened with an Irish fiddle tune, trading blinding guitar licks with equally fine fiddle runs. Bromberg fronts a large band (trombone, sax, bass, drums—all multi-instrumentalists) and the immediate impression is that Bromberg can't make much more money than his band.

The line-up has an incredible amount of energy that

is capable of doing Dixieland as well as the sweetest of rhythm and blues.

Leaning heavily on his *Midnight on the Water* LP, Bromberg made occasional forays into his other work, "Suffer to Sing the Blues" from his first album and "Sharon" from *Demon in Disguise* stand out.

"Sharon," a song about a striptease Lorelei had its moments. Bromberg employs an old blues trick on guitar where he lets the guitar finish a phrase which he has begun singing. In "Sharon," he told the audience that he could hear Sharon calling to him, then proceeded to make the guitar not only call his name, but make obscene suggestions.

The versatility of the band let Bromberg have three fiddles and three mandolins on stage at a time, creating incredible depths.

Bromberg is a sublime instrumentalist, and what makes him stand head, hands and feet above any other instrumentalist I can think of is his impeccable taste and feeling.

Bromberg plays the best guitar I've ever heard. What he lacks in vocal quality he makes up in feeling and spontaneity.

His reading of the classic ballad, "Mr. Blue" would have been exceptionally hard for just about anyone else to bring off. Bromberg made it both sensitive and satisfying.

Bromberg has got to love his music. He has a broad blues background, ("Stack-a-Lee" being the most obvious standout). At one point he laughingly fined one of his band members for not following his spontaneous guitar line. He copped it from James Brown (he freely admitted) and said that for a James Brown fanatic (like his horn player), it was unforgivable not to follow.

If there was any doubt about Bromberg giving all, it was quickly put away after the show when Bromberg showed up at the Howard Street Tavern and jammed with the Sandy Creek Pickers.

Simply, Bromberg put on the very best show I have ever seen. Why anyone with that sort of live show remains a cult artist is beyond me. David Bromberg's appearances are everything rock concerts should be, and are not.

# Poetry publisher . . .

Continued from Page 8

John Campbell, World of Poetry director, said that poetry is its only interest and it helps educate poets. Campbell said it also serves as a clearing house for poetry.

Recently Campbell said that the World of Poetry is talking to ABC about a possible national television program dealing with poetry. However, when contacted, ABC said they had never heard of John Campbell or the World of Poetry.

The Better Business Bureau of Sacramento, Calif., said it had received numerous complaints from people since the World of Poetry moved from San Francisco to Sacramento in 1977. The major complaint was about merchandise received from the company.

The National Poetry Press is in Agoura, Calif. The Better Business Bureau in Los Angeles said it also had received numerous complaints about the company. The National Poetry Press could not be reached for comment because its telephone number is unlisted. The Chamber of Commerce in Agoura has never heard of the company.

The World of Poetry sends out quarterly newsletters giving information on poetry and upcoming contests. There are four annual poetry contests, Campbell said. Three contests have first, second and third place prizes of \$100, \$50 and \$25.

The current contest has a first place prize of \$1,000, while second and third places receive \$500 and \$250 res-

pectively.

The poems are judged by Eddie Lou Cole, who has won 135 poetry and literary awards and contests, Campbell said. Cole and other judges narrow the field down to a few and Cole picks the top three for the cash prizes, Campbell said.

The first \$1,000 winner was a medical technologist and housewife from Pancho-Cordova, Calif. Although Helen Glass said she knew Cole, the judge, she said this had nothing to do with her winning the contest.

"If you knew Eddie, you'd know she is a very fair and picky person. If it (the poem) wasn't good, she wouldn't have picked it," Glass said.

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