



PLAYING FROM A repertoire collected over a span 50 years, B.B. King delights a sold-out crowd at the Lied Center for Performing Arts.

The once and future King

Blues legend rocks sold-out Lied

BY PATRICK KELLY
Music Critic

The blues is an expression of life. It displays joy, pain, happiness, desperation and the heart-break of love and love lost.

For B.B. King, the blues is life.

For the people packing the Lied Center for Performing Arts Sunday night, King was the wise old sage preaching and teaching the ways of living nonstop for almost two hours.

And even with 72 years of living, 75 albums and more than 50 of playing under his belt, he did so with great humility.

"I don't see my influence," King said in his tour bus before the show. "I hear people say (how I've influenced other musicians), but I don't see my influence. I hear them playing their own thing, and I admire them for what they do."

The highly influential, yet extremely modest King still does not realize how much of an impression he has made on musicians like Eric Clapton, Robert Cray and Stevie Ray Vaughan.

Just as King has impressed musicians, he struck a similar chord with Sunday's audience.

When a player performs with such emotion,

the audience is left wondering from where the energy comes. King speculated on the importance of putting oneself wholly into his craft.

"With any entertainer or any performer, you always put you in it, and you do what feels good at the time," he said. "And so, therefore, you have to kind of be in it to do it. If I didn't feel what I was doing it would become boring."

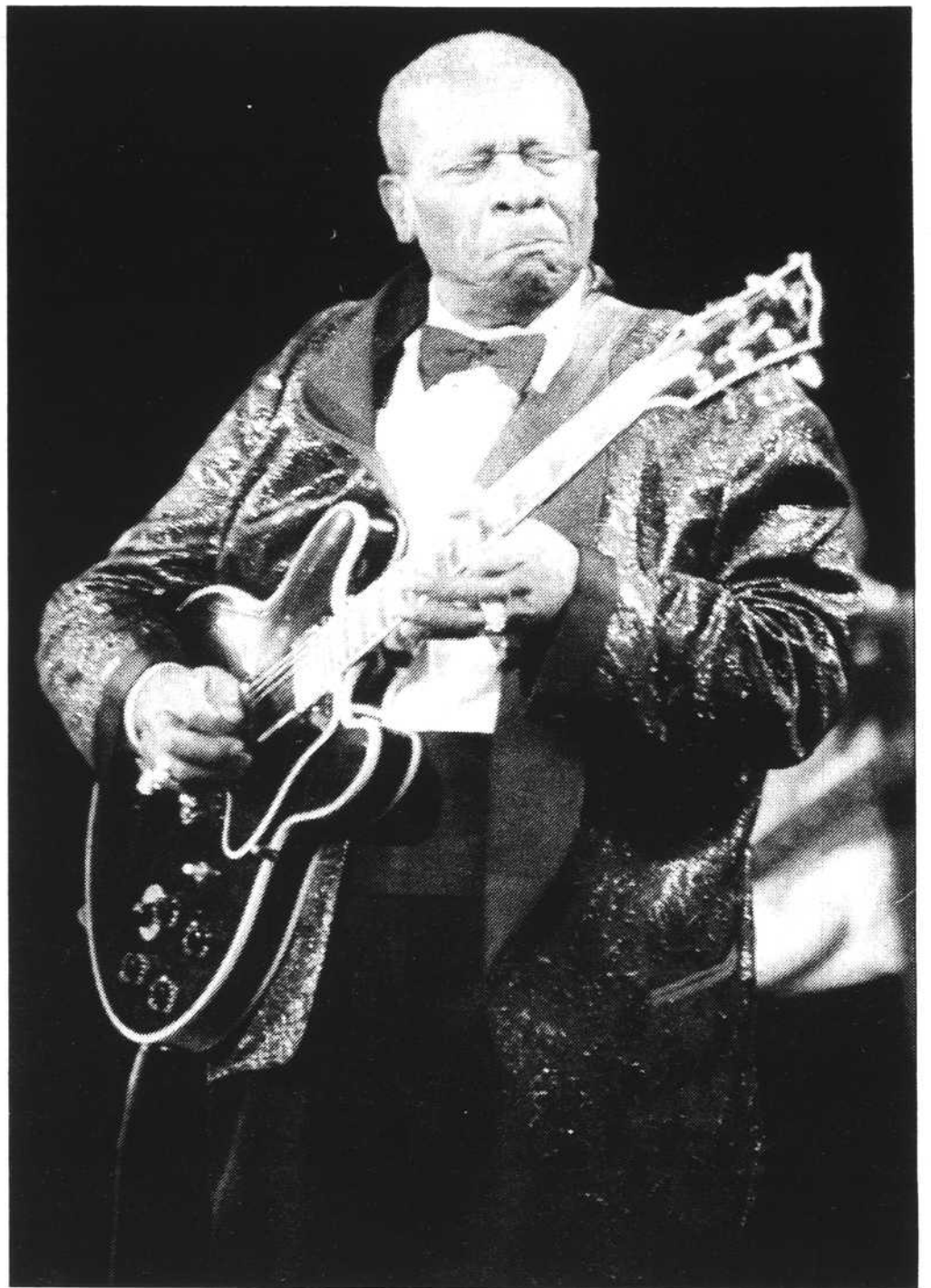
King's on-stage presence showed he was anything but boring and lacking in feeling. Aside from his awe-inspiring guitar wizardry, King danced about the stage to the full delight of the audience.

After singing a mournful verse of blues he would play up the crowd, sniffing and acting like he was crying, or impersonating a conversation he once had.

Dialogue played an important part in King's performance. Just as Lucille responds to his singing, King responds to his band, stepping out of the spotlight long enough to let members display their unique talent.

King also opens up to the audience. He sits down "not because I'm tired," he explained to the audience, but because he wants to let the music, under his lead, tell a story.

Apart from having to perform with so much



B.B. KING jams out on his guitar, Lucille, Sunday night at the Lied Center for Performing Arts.

verve and energy, King accomplishes the additional task of doing it night after night, 300 a year.

This may lead the already bewildered fan to wonder how the guitarist can put so much soul into each song he plays, he said.

"Each time I perform or work on a song I work on it as I feel it now, not as I recorded it five years ago, 10 years ago, 15 years ago, but now," King said. "Like tonight when I go on stage I will do what I feel now, the way I feel it now. And generally that's fresh, so I feel good."

In his lifetime, King has seen where the blues is rooted, and he has hopes of where it will go in the future.

"I hope that it will go into the mainstream of music so people can hear it," he said. "Today, we have a lot of young people supporting it and playing it, and I'm hoping that the radio stations and the music media will feature it as they do other kinds of music. Most of the music you hear has got to have a little of the blues in it because the blues was here first."

The blues was here first and as long as there are performers who can run through such classics as "Stormy Monday," "How Blue Can You Get" and "The Thrill Is Gone," the blues will live on.

And as long as those songs continue to move people, there will only be one King.

Christopher Lloyd relates life on camera

BY LIZA HOLTMEIER
Senior Reporter

No blinding white shock of hair reminiscent of Einstein's wild do. No white lab coat over a colorful shirt. No shouts of "Great Scott!" accompanied by a smack to the forehead.

When Christopher Lloyd spoke to three groups of University of Nebraska-Lincoln theater students Friday, he was quiet, pensive and unassuming. He was the polar opposite of the off-beat characters — like Dr. Emmett L. Brown from "Back to the Future" and Jim from "Taxi" — he normally plays.

Dressed in a T-shirt and jeans with his dark gray hair cut short, Lloyd related some of his experiences in the performance industry with a subtle sense of humor. Make-up artist Kenny Myers, hair designer, Karen Myers and UNL theater professor Sandy Veneziano joined Lloyd for three 40-minute discussions in the lobby of Howell Theatre.

Lloyd said his varied acting career began at the age of 14.

"I kind of fell down to acting," Lloyd said, laughing. "I was academically hopeless, which eliminated a lot of possibilities. Early on, I

found I could get myself out of awkward situations, and that ability steered me toward acting."

By age 16, Lloyd was apprenticing in summer stock, and at the age of 19, he moved to New York to take acting classes. Lloyd's first performances were in off-Broadway productions. Since then, he has appeared in a number of Broadway, New York Shakespeare Festivals and off-Broadway productions.

Lloyd's film career began with his role in the 1975 movie "One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest" with Jack Nicholson. After shooting finished, Lloyd was determined to pursue a film career. In 1976, he moved to Los Angeles.

In 1978, Lloyd made a guest appearance on the eighth episode of "Taxi." The following season, he was added as a cast regular.

Lloyd has won three Emmy Awards — two for Outstanding Supporting Actor in a Comedy Series for his role in "Taxi" and one for Outstanding Actor in a Drama Series for a guest appearance on Disney's "Avonlea."

Lloyd's film career consists of various colorful characters, including Doc Brown in the "Back to the Future" trilogy, Fester Addams in "The Addams Family," Professor Plum in "Clue" and Judge Doom in "Who Framed Roger Rabbit."

Recently, Lloyd finished shooting Walt Disney's production of "My Favorite Martian" with Jeff Daniels, Elizabeth Hurley and Daryl Hannah. The movie is scheduled for release in 1998.

With such a varied career in stage and screen, Lloyd said it was difficult to choose which medium he most favored.

"You can reach so many more people through film," Lloyd said. "Yet, theater has more of a sense of community, of ensemble. There is a deeper sense of reliance."

Lloyd added that the energy created during a stage performance is hard to replicate on film.

The right role

Regardless of the medium, Lloyd said he was drawn to parts in which he feels connected and inspired.

"I kind of have my eyes open for roles that have something that I want to say," Lloyd said. "As actors, we're the chroniclers of time. We're blessed with the opportunity to say something about the events of the day."

Lloyd added that this opportunity engenders a great amount of excitement in him during the creation process.

"I love the excitement of creating something, the excitement of getting an idea, the excitement of imagining something and making it happen," Lloyd said.

When formulating a character, Lloyd said he first concentrated on his physicality.

"One of the first things that comes to me when I read a script is an image," Lloyd said. "What does this character look like? I start working out what I can do physically."

However, Lloyd said after he formulated a character's image, a director sometimes would ask him to be more subtle. "I often have to be reminded by directors, 'Take it down. Take it down,'" Lloyd said. "I tend to go over the top."

Lloyd said he hoped to increase the range of his acting in the future through independent films. He called independent films "gold mines" and said they provided him with the opportunity to escape the stereotyping of the big studios.

"The big studios will never give me a romantic lead because I don't have a track record for that," Lloyd said. "(Independent films) are the opportunity to do the kind of roles and the kind of material that a big studio

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