

Petty knows how it feels to skip hits, still wow fans

By Ed Masley

MUSIC REVIEW

Tom Petty may not be the first big rock 'n' roll star ever to sell out a venue the size of the Civic Arena and then spend nearly two hours completely ignoring the songs that made him famous.

He'd almost have to be the first one who's ever gotten away with it, though.

And he got away with it in a real big way, too.

Without an "American Girl" or "Don't Do Me Like That" in sight, Petty had last night's Arena crowd right where he wanted 'em — up on their feet and shoutin' out the good parts.

He played b-sides. He played new, unreleased stuff. He played his share of hits, too, but nothing older than 1989's "I Won't Back Down." At least not until "Refugee." And then it was a quick romp through "Runnin' Down A Dream," and goodnight, Mr. Petty

— leaving all the big guns for the encore.

So why did the crowd seem so satisfied, many clapping along, others thrashing wildly to a brand new cowpunk number called "Drivin' Down To Georgia?"

Blame it on the strength of the new material and raise your lighter high. "Wildflowers" is the strongest Tom Petty release to see the light of day since 1985's "Southern Accents." In fact, it may be his best yet.

And without all those overblown Jeff Lynne production techniques dragging them down, the songs off "Full Moon Fever" and "Into The Great Wide Open" took on a whole new life.

You want a happy Arena? Try givin' them a "Hey baby" like the one in "I Won't Back Down." Or how about a "Whoa yeah" like that one in "You Wreck Me?"

If they're still not singing along after a few hooks like that, it's



Tom Petty

probably best to pack up the tour bus and move on to Cleveland.

Petty doesn't have those problems.

In fact, "You Don't Know How It Feels," the first single off "Wildflowers," may be well on its way to becoming the "Freebird" of the '90s.

By the second time Petty hit that "Let's get to the point, let's roll another joint" line, it was getting kind of hard to hear the man over the roar of the crowd.

It sure doesn't hurt any that Petty's longstanding backup band, the Heartbreakers, is among the best in the business. It didn't take much more than a song or two to remind the world why keyboardist Benmont Tench is one of the most-sought-after session players going.

And as for guitarist Mike Campbell, Petty would be lost without him. The man is brilliant, squeezing out perfect, tasteful solos from one end of the set list to the other.

It's always been Petty's ballgame, of course, and last night was no exception. Having perfected the stoned weirdo image in videos like "Don't Come Around Here No More" and "Mary Jane's Last Dance," Petty can't help but charm a crowd into submission.

Never was that more apparent than on "The Girl on LSD," the flip side of a recent single. Petty was hilarious, spitting out lines like "I'm in love with a girl on LSD. She's seen things I'll never see."

As for Peter Drobe, his opening blast of convertible-ready folk rock fit Petty's show so well it was almost criminal. He even looked a little Pettesque in that ridiculous "You Don't Know How It Feels" video hat.

The day he writes his first "Even The Losers," — and, sorry, "If You Don't Love Me (I'll Kill Myself)" is not it — Drobe could be onto something. In the meantime, I'd bet the farm that he and his band do one hell of an "American Girl."

String of B-movies Fletcher for ho

By Lynette Rice
Los Angeles Daily News

LOS ANGELES — The memory of winning an Oscar is sweet, but Louise Fletcher will never forget the moment after she walked off the stage at the 1976 Academy Awards.

She, along with Jack Nicholson, director Milos Forman, writer Bo Goldman and producer Saul Zaentz were busy reveling in their accolades for "One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest" — all five won Oscars — when Forman quickly brought them back to reality.

"Milos said, 'Now we will all make tremendous failures,'" the actress recalled.

Forman went on to win another directing Oscar for "Amadeus." Goldman wrote "Melvin and Howard" and "Scent of a Woman," and Nicholson became — well, Nicholson. Fletcher, meanwhile, played a string of roles that seemed like cheap imitations of her infamous Nurse Ratched. And the flops were painfully numerous: "Exorcist II: The Heretic," "Mama Dracula," "Invaders From Mars," "Flowers in the Attic," to name a few.

Fletcher realized that she had a tough act to follow — even if it was her own.

"No great roles came along after 'Cuckoo's Nest.' That was so special," said Fletcher, who won the statuette for Best Actress. "How can you compete with that? I've been doing a lot since then. I just haven't broken through the stratosphere."

Siskel, Ebert do about movies a

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of the word lifetime? He thinks the world revolves around him. He's an only child who only has one person in his life to tell him he's wrong — i.e., me.

QUESTION: Name one star whose work your partner consistently praises when there's not sufficient reason?

EBERT: I don't think he praises any star who doesn't deserve it. He will tell you mine is Robert Mitchum.

SISKEL: He likes everything, lately, that Whoopi Goldberg has done. He liked [her] in "Made in America."

I think there are people he's afraid to knock when they misstep — a lot of people. Sometimes I

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