

CONCERT REVIEWS

Sex Gang Children; Monkey Paw; Pressurehead

(The Roxy: +48 capacity: \$13.50)

Promoted by GoldenVoice. Sex Gang Children: Andi Sex Gang, Chris Thomas, Dave Roberts, John Thompson. Reviewed June 28, 1992.

Oh, to still be plugging away when your movement is over. This is the story of Sex Gang Children. Mainstays of the so-called "Gothic" or "Batcave" movement of the mid-'80s, which was based on the Batcave night-spot in London, Sex Gang Children was one of a pack of bands that emerged from that scene.

Combining the campy glam of T. Rex with the horror elements of Bela Lugosi's finest cinematic achievements, Sex Gang Children, Specimen, Alien Sex Fiend and a slew of lesser lights (or darks, as the case may be) were the toast of the rock underground.

Seven years ago, that is. In 1992, only those kids who missed the lurid original still turn out for these bands, and in the case of Sex Gang Children, there aren't a whole lot, with the Roxy half filled.

The Cleopatra recording artists strutted onto the stage to the tune of "Tomorrow Belongs to Me," the Nazi anthem from the musical "Cabaret." Cute. And that was as threatening as they got.

Mixing a decidedly straight rock & roll groove right out of the New York Dolls, the band members showed their Brit roots proudly with their utterly stiff-lipped backbeat and bleated vocals.

Andi Sex Gang's typically fey stage persona offered few surprises, but why should it? After all, at this point the band is a nostalgia show, and judging by the less-than-ecstatic reaction of the crowd, not a very potent one.

Openers were the local indis-

trial trio Pressurehead, a pleasant pastiche of quasi-tech and sloganeering. With a legit frontman, Pressurehead might rise out of the mundane trap it's settled in.

As for middle act Monkey Paw, its awfulness can barely be described. With a lead singer who was a humorless (but hilarious) cross between Pavarotti, Jello Biafra and Freddie Mercury, they were side-splittingly overdramatic and musically wretched. —John Carmen

No Doubt

(The Whisky: 400 capacity: \$12.50 top)

Promoted by GoldenVoice. Band: Gwen Stefani, Tony Kanal, Eric Stefani, Tom Dumont, Adrian Young. Reviewed June 24, 1992.

This Orange County group has been a big local draw for some time now, but Thursday's show here will go a long way in making No Doubt more of a national attraction.

With a house full of industry types on hand, the band ignited songs from its debut Interscope release as well as several new tunes, adding a fire and excitement to the music that's missing from the otherwise solid album.

And it's hard not to like a band who, save for singer Gwen Stefani, shaved their heads before the show just for fun.

Opener "Get on the Ball," the infectious "Let's Get Back" and the cool time changes of "Ache" were album cuts particularly effective at getting the kids jumping.

Band's interesting hybrid of funk, rock and ska, supplemented by a horn section, is a unique, fun sound that should find much support in today's alternative-aware music scene.

Though some of the songs are a little simple and, at times, derivative, the band's youthful zeal and obvious enthusiasm make those criticisms easy to overlook.

—Troy J. Augusto

TriStar TV taps Pierce for publicity

Justin Pierce has joined TriStar TV as director of publicity, reuniting him with former New World Entertainment exec who came over last fall when Sony Pictures Entertainment reactivated the TriStar TV banner.

Pierce will report to both Columbia Pictures TV publicity VP Libby Gill and TriStar division prez Jon Feltheimer, overseeing p.r. on prime time series.

Pierce has been with New World for more than six years, most recently as senior VP of media relations and special projects.

In that capacity he supervised publicity and helped oversee "The Wonder Years" as part of the remaining production staff, headed by exec VP Brian Frons.

Past with Collins

Before joining New World TV in 1986, Pierce worked as a consultant to Joan Collins' Gemini Star Prods. and was a senior account exec at Michael Levine Public Relations.

Feltheimer and other top staffers left New World last November in a transfer of assets letting Sony pick up nearly all of NWE's prime time development.

The unit is producing the new shows "Loved by You," "The Edge" and "Good Advice" for next season plus first-run telefilms and the current latenight series "Forever Knight."

China gov't will light 'Red Lantern'

"Raise the Red Lantern," a Chinese-Hong Kong-Taiwan coproduction that was nominated earlier this year for the best foreign-language film Oscar, has been approved for showing in China, almost a year after it was submitted to government authorities.

The Ministry of Radio, Film & Television did not explain why it took so long to approve director Zhang Yimou's film, which is set in pre-Communist China and deals with a young woman's repressive marriage to a wealthy landowner.

Originally titled "Dahong Denglong Gaogao Cua," "Raise the Red Lantern" is currently in U.S. release through Orion Classics. The film's production company said it could be shown in China by early August.

B.O. as lobby

The government's move has been interpreted as a sign of a more permissive attitude in deciding which films can be exhibited, perhaps in response to the recent slip-ping in the Chinese B.O.

The ministry has announced that it will re-evaluate pictures that previously were not approved for release.

TOP 50 VIDEO TITLES

From Variety's survey of rental transactions			For week ended June 26	
Rank	Last	Title and distrib	Volume Indicator	Weeks on chart
1	1	Cape Fear (MCA/Universal)	118.68	3
2	—	The Addams Family (Paramount)	110.57	1
3	2	Father of the Bride (Buena Vista)	108.15	4
4	4	My Girl (Col TriStar)	98.15	4
5	3	JFK (Warner)	96.84	5
6	—	Kuffs (MCA/Universal)	94.26	1
7	5	For the Boys (Fox Video)	88.24	4
8	9	Freejack (Warner)	84.60	7
9	6	The Butcher's Wife (Paramount)	83.42	6
10	10	Highlander 2 (Col TriStar)	82.50	6
11	7	Frankie & Johnny (Paramount)	82.23	8
12	8	The Last Boy Scout (Warner)	80.13	10
13	12	Little Man Tate (Orion)	79.59	9
14	11	Deceived (Buena Vista)	78.15	12
15	15	Shattered (MGM/UA)	77.63	13
16	13	The Fisher King (Col TriStar)	77.50	13
17	14	The People Under the Stairs (MCA/Universal)	75.44	9
18	18	The Commitments (Fox Video)	75.00	7
19	21	The Super (Fox Video)	73.68	13
20	16	Ricochet (HBO Video)	73.22	11
21	19	Curly Sue (Warner)	70.39	12
22	25	Dead Again (Paramount)	69.47	15
23	33	Naked Lunch (Fox Video)	69.07	2
24	17	Company Business (MGM/UA)	68.94	5
25	20	Homicide (Col TriStar)	65.92	8
26	23	House Party 2 (New Line)	65.78	7
27	27	At Play in the Fields of the Lord (MCA/Universal)	65.52	7
28	24	Necessary Roughness (Paramount)	65.13	11
28	35	Strictly Business (Warner)	65.13	6
30	—	Waxwerk II (Live)	64.73	1
31	26	Late for Dinner (New Line)	64.47	8
32	45	Truly, Madly, Deeply (Buena Vista)	64.07	3
33	28	Boyz n the Hood (Col TriStar)	62.76	15
34	36	City of Hope (Col TriStar)	62.23	5
35	34	Paradise (Buena Vista)	61.57	13
36	32	The Doctor (Buena Vista)	60.78	14
37	37	The Indian Runner (MGM/UA)	59.21	3
38	29	Other People's Money (Warner)	59.07	14
38	43	My Own Private Idaho (New Line)	59.07	9
40	31	Rambling Rose (Live)	58.94	13
41	22	Diary of a Hitman (Col TriStar)	58.28	2
42	42	Thelma & Louise (MGM/UA)	57.63	24
43	30	Billy Bathgate (Buena Vista)	56.97	12
44	39	Into the Sun (Vidmark)	56.57	6
45	44	Don't Tell Mom the Babysitter's Dead (HBO)	55.85	18
45	48	29th Street (Fox Video)	55.65	9
47	38	Regarding Henry (Paramount)	54.60	20
48	41	Black Robe (Vidmark)	54.07	11
49	40	McBain (SGE)	52.63	6
50	46	Year of the Gun (Col TriStar)	50.52	7

© 1992 Variety Inc. All rights reserved. Variety's Top 50 Video Titles chart is a weekly tally of the top-renting videocassettes based on a national survey of stores in the top 25 markets. In addition to ranking the vids, the chart uses a Volume Indicator, an exclusive feature of the Variety chart that reflects the strength of each vid relative to the other titles listed. Each participating store uses a point system to rate its top-renting titles. The Volume Indicator conveys the disparity in rental action among the vids listed. While the highest score possible is 130, anything higher than 100 reflects a particularly strong rental. To obtain a perfect score, a vid would have to be identified as the top renter at every store in the poll.

HBO, Cinemax buck trend with growth in subscribers

NEW YORK—Despite the recent downward trend for premium services, both Home Box Office and sister service Cinemax posted modest subscriber growth during June, while E! Entertainment, CNBC, VH-1 and the Learning Channel led the basic cable services, according to Nielsen figures.

Overall cable subscribers dropped 0.3% for the period representing some 200,000 subscribers. However, the statistics for all of cable are estimates and routinely fluctuate.

An average of 20 cable networks, which does not include CNBC, Comedy Central, the Learning Channel, the Movie Channel or any other pay channels, dropped 0.1% during June.

Cable now reaches 60,043,000 homes according to the statistics, though on a year-to-year basis, total subscriber levels are up 1.2% or about 758,000 homes.

HBO notched a 2.1% increase

from the month before recording a subscriber base of 20.4 million. Nonetheless, year to year, the granddaddy of the pay cable world is off 0.6%.

Cinemax was up 0.5% for the month, though it too is off 5.8% annually.

VH-1 saw its subscriber tally go up 9% for the month to now reach more than 46.8 million homes. CNBC, one of the fastest growing services in recent months, was up 0.2% to 46.8 million, and E! Entertainment rose 1.1% in the month to reach 20.1 million homes. On an annual basis, E! is up 16.5%.

Nostalgia was another network that was up for the month, seeing a 4.8% subscriber growth bringing its sub base to 10.5 million.

Among the networks posting small declines for the month were Black Entertainment Television (-1.5%), CNN (-0.4%), Country Music Television (-0.8%), and ESPN (-0.6%).