

Ramones' concert anything but 'sedated'

By LAURA PACE
Collegian Arts Writer

They sat around the space heater like it was a campfire, with a half-empty bottle of Perrier, a bag of Rold Gold pretzels and a Domino's Pizza box.

Rock and roll gurus, the Ramones, sat upstairs at the Allentown Airport Music Hall before their sold-out show Friday night.

On the TV was a Marilyn Monroe movie and road crew members walked through the rubble to ready their instruments.

From under his mop of frizzy black tresses that reached his nose and his rose-colored wire-rim glasses, Joey Ramone mumbled with his characteristic sarcastic smile.

Joey said the band originated in Queens, N.Y., and that the band has been together for 13 years.

He added that he is currently working on a song for Poison.

"It's a good song," he said as he smoothed his typical black leather pants.

"We're the best we've ever been," he said about their live show, which is supporting their recent release, *Halfway to Sanity*. (The album comes complete with the suggestion "Play Loud.")

Joey is the lead vocalist, whose words are barely audible in concert, though the songs are easily recognizable.

From across the room with considerably more energy, lead guitarist Johnny Ramone spoke with great enthusiasm.

"We're getting psyched now," Johnny said when asked what the group does to ready themselves for a show. The room was strangely quiet, and the band was hardly moving.

"We get tired, but then we get up there (on stage) and all of a sudden, you feel OK again," Johnny said.

The Ramones do not view their current dates as a "tour." They feel they are always on tour.

"We've been on tour for three years. We play all year and go home for a while," Johnny said. "It's not like (we're) out permanently."



The band has just returned from a 24-day trip to Europe. When asked how the audience responded, Joey mumbled, "They're English. They drink more beer."

"The people are a lot wilder," Johnny added.

The opening act on Friday was Original Sin, a band from Allentown. The Ramones use local acts as openers.

"They have to be disciplined," remarked Joey. "We have a two-page list of rules and regulations."

One of the band's assistants called from the corner.

"Yeh, like there will be no throwing of sticky substances like slime, snot, poop, or bodily excrements," he said.

"Oh, and leave our mikes onstage if they jump into the crowd," someone added.

Drummer Mark (Markie) Ramone sported a haircut similar to Joey's and wandered aimlessly around the dressing room.

Bass player Dee Dee Ramone had a Sid Vicious haircut. He said little throughout the evening, but cast a knowing smile.

The group doesn't mention any influences because, according to Johnny, "There are too many of them." Joey said his favorite group changes every year.

"Well, Kix came to see us, so I guess we like them," Joey said sarcastically.



Collegian file photos

Hey you!

"You missed a note, bro!" Singer Joey Ramone tells bassist Dee Dee Ramone.

Does the band have a motto? "Same Shit, Different Day," joked one of the roadies.

Parting words for the college crowd?

"Come and see us," said Johnny. "Go buy our record," Joey mumbled.

Joey mumbled his way through most of the evening, though the audience, which was well over 1,000 people, didn't mind.

In fact, the audience was an integral part of the show. The assorted crowd members moshed, skanked and slammed throughout the evening.

One excited crowd member yelled, "I got to stage dive! Didja see that

last stage dive? That was me!"

The attire included Sex Pistols T-shirts, shirts with logos of punk bands, and tons of leather. Hair was spiked and teased, and came in a variety of colors, ranging from Aimee Mann White to, well, Joey Ramone Black.

A young student with a black mohawk, self-bleached jeans, an earring, and a Sid Vicious T-shirt wandered around most of the evening, occasionally jumping into the huddled mass at the front of the stage.

The usual patter between songs that most bands use, was replaced by the Ramones familiar "ONETWOTH-

REEFOUR" that connected song to song.

Their set contained the familiar "Rock and Roll High School," from the movie of the same name. The song was much faster than on vinyl, and the crowd response was positive.

One of the best songs on *Halfway to Sanity* called "I Wanna Live," was the first song of the first encore and was one of the best songs of the evening.

The smoke hung heavily throughout the hall, and the lights barely made a distinction between the black backdrop and the black locks of the band members.

"Do You Wanna Dance," was also a crowd-pleaser and was performed well. Johnny's guitar work was smooth and Joey's lyrics were most audible on this song.

"Weasel Face" left some of the crowd staring, but left some chanting. "WEEEASEL face."

Also worth mentioning, was the Ramones' classics "I Wanna Be Sedated," and the ever-popular "Bonzo Goes to Bitburg."

Airport Music Hall in Allentown served as the perfect setting for this kind of concert.

Tickets were purchased mostly in advance, but about 200 were sold at the door, said the hall's general manager, Pat Lenover.

All ages were admitted to the show, but non-minors were stamped at the door and permitted to take their own alcohol to the upper balcony.

The balcony crowd was considerably more mellow than the thrashing gang on the floor. These concert-goers sat around coolers, passed cigarettes and some were content to lay against the back wall as the Ramones did before the show.

On the floor, courageous people were thrown into the mass toward the stage. Some sat at tables near the back, and others just wandered.

This setup was suitable for anyone, young or old, partiers or mellow people, and let everyone enjoy the show.

The Ramones were there for the audience, and the audience was there for the Ramones.

Make tracks to the store to buy TRAX 'In the U.S.S.R.' Joel LP is red hot

By VICKY AUDENRIED
Collegian Arts Writer

"The children were nestled all snug in their beds; as visions of TRAX danced in their heads."

TRAX? Why do the kids want TRAX? Isn't that a brand of sneakers? Or is it some kind of new toy race track? A new Transformer?

No, it's not, Santa.

TRAX is a game — and a very popular one, if the people at The United States Playing Card Co. have their way.

Earlier this year the company acquired the rights to TRAX which has taken New Zealand by storm since its first publication there in 1982.

Distribution of the game began in the States on Oct. 1 — almost in time for the all-important Christmas buying season. "Since the game has only been distributed to certain regions and metropolitan areas (in the United States), we've missed the big selling season for Christmas," Susan Black, new product manager for the company said. "But the stores that carry it are selling out fast."

No wonder. Any game with the ability to inspire clubs and televised tournaments, as TRAX has in New Zealand (much like the Rubik's Cube phenomenon in 1981), seems destined to be a hit.

TRAX is a simple domino-like, one-on-one game which can be played at almost any age or level. Each player takes turns placing 64 colored game tiles in an imaginary eight-by-eight-tile area. Each red tile has two sides — one with curved

black and white lines, and one with crossing black and white lines. Through the strategic placement of the tiles, both players strive to complete an unbroken line, which must be eight tiles wide or deep, or a loop in their designated black or white line. Pretty simple, huh?

Wrong.

Like checkers or chess, TRAX is a game which requires concentration and strategic planning. Although beginning games take only 10 minutes, experts skillful in developing offensive and defensive strategies can take up to an hour per game. Players who do not consider upcoming moves may unintentionally surrender the game to their opponent.

According to *Games* magazine, which has ranked TRAX among the Top 100 Games for five consecutive years, "Players who get fixated on local tactics are likely to win the battle but lose the war."

The challenge of TRAX and its educational value led Parents Choice magazine to present it with the Gold Seal award in 1987. High school educators in New Zealand have developed and encouraged "TRAX Clubs" as a result, as well.

The game's inventor, David Smith, designed the game so that, "strategic moves and counter-moves keep the game endlessly fascinating."

A former accountant, Smith has invented 52 games, 20 of which have been published in the United States. He invented his first at 14.

Smith was hit by the idea for TRAX while on a business trip in 1980. He promptly locked himself

in his hotel room, creating TRAX by the end of the day. The first cardboard version of the now plastic game rolled off the presses in 1982. The rest, as they say, is history.

In response to the cult-like following TRAX has received in New Zealand, Smith has written two books — *How to Play Better TRAX* and *Winning TRAX*. In case you're already a TRAX junkie, don't waste your time running to Pattee — they aren't in the stacks.

And if you're a junkie wanna-be, don't waste your time searching for TRAX in Happy Valley, because it's nowhere to be found. Macy's in New York and some J.C. Penney and Sears stores are carrying the game, as well as smaller gift and toy shops, Smith said. But you had better run fast, because chances are early Christmas shoppers have beaten you to the TRAX.

The game may be an unspatable hit in New Zealand, but does it have what it takes to make TRAX (sorry!) in the fiercely competitive American toy market?

The United States Playing Card Co. thinks so. "We feel it will fill a special niche in the games market in this country. Consumer interest is returning to the traditional strategy games and there is no other game like TRAX. . . It's portable, it's challenging, it's fun," Black said.

Who knows? Maybe next year TRAX will be the Cabbage Patch Doll, Rubik's Cube, or Slinky of Christmas 1988. At \$15 a set, it's a lot cheaper than an Atari and much more provocative than a Pet Rock.

'In the U.S.S.R.' Joel LP is red hot

By MICHAEL W. GATES
Collegian Arts Writer

Kohuept — Billy Joel (Columbia C2X 40996)

Joel in the U.S.S.R., you don't know how lucky we are.

Billy Joel's newest release, *Kohuept*, boasts a double album concert recording from his recent tour of the Soviet Union. Joel, who was chosen as part of an ongoing cultural exchange between the United States and the U.S.S.R., played in several major Soviet cities. And who better exemplifies American rock'n'roll than Joel, whose career spans more than 15 years, and whose topics are representative of the American way of life?

The album opens with The Georgian Singers "Zhournalist" of U.S.S.R. and the Russian song "Odoya." The remaining songs range from versions of Joel's early greats such as "Angry Young Man" to cuts from his last album, *The Bridge*.

Also included are renditions of the poignant Bob Dylan song "The Times They Are A Changin'," and The Beatles' upbeat "Back in the U.S.S.R."

Some may perceive this as just another greatest hits album, but only five of the sixteen tracks can be found on *Greatest Hits Volume I and Volume II*.

Joel's performance on this release ranges from poor to excellent; however, the bulk of the album showcases the entertainer's stamina and flair for the piano. While Joel has not retained the vocal range found in his earlier years, he compensates with his ability to deliver a song.

In "An Innocent Man," a song sorely missing from his greatest hits album, he recruits Peter Hewlett to help him on vocals. Hewlett sings the high notes of the refrain, while Joel waits in the wings with his forceful, low voice. However, Joel's brief absences in no way effect the emotional appeal. The combination of voices works well and produces a riveting performance of a great song.

Side two consists of three long versions of Joel's jazzier songs. Especially pleasing is the powerful 13-minute arrangement of "Big Man on Mulberry Street." The song is as big as life, and captures Joel at his entertaining best. "Mulberry" also utilizes the back-up performers' talents, rendering a full, rich jazz sound.

Also on this side is "Baby Grand," originally produced as a duet between Joel and Ray Charles. Although Joel could never compensate for the absence of Charles, he does his

record review

best to please and tease the audience with the slow blues tune. The result is, at the least, satisfying.

Joel's search for truth and "Honesty" makes for an intimate combination of Joel and piano. This live version reminisces his early days of playing the piano bars, and demonstrates Joel's ability to command a song.

Also touching is "Goodnight Saigon," the singer's homage to those who fought in the Vietnam War. A slow driving beat accompanies Joel on his melodic journey to Southeast Asia.

Strong on the upbeat is "Only the Good Die Young." Joel's celebration of what the Roman Catholic Church condemns as sinful. The rousing bouncy song is one of Joel's trademarks, and continually gets people dancing in the aisles.

The problem with the songs that don't seem to work is the lack of orchestration. Whenever Joel plays the piano or guitar, the song seems balanced; however, the lone combination of drums and guitar fails miserably.

Perhaps the most inferior song on the album is "A Matter of Trust," in which Joel relies on his gravelly voice, a screeching electric guitar, and an overbearing drum beat. The mixture just doesn't cut it.

The rest of the songs remain mediocre, and include such hits as "Uptown Girl," Joel's tribute to his wife Christie Brinkley; "Big Shot," which recounts the escapades of a lampshade-toting party animal and "Siletto," the account of a manipulative woman.

Joel's dialogue in between songs occasionally gets moderately political. Such is the case with his introduction to "Allentown." He explains that this is a song about people who "desperately want to leave, but they stay, because they were brought up to believe things would get better . . . Maybe that sounds familiar."

At the end of the album, Joel compares the current happenings in the U.S.S.R. to the 1960s in America, and then begins Dylan's "The Times . . ."

Overall, the album is mixed with slow emotion, bouncing fun, and blaring noise. Obviously the record has its ups and downs, but ultimately Joel emerges slightly victorious, mainly due to his abilities as a performer.

Education abroad program visits Italy



Lynn Melander and Pat Succì are two of the students pictured in the group of students who participated in the study abroad program in Todi, Italy.

By RON P. SWEGMAN
Collegian Arts Writer

The opportunity to study art and architecture, and the rich history of these subjects, in one of the cradles of the artistic world is open to University students this summer through the Education Abroad Program in Italy.

The ancient Umbrian villa of Todi is the destination for this summer's program. The area is rich in well-preserved Etruscan, Roman and medieval art and architecture.

"This program is broad and all-encompassing," said Vincent Virgulti, one of the University faculty members who will accompany the students who go to this year's program.

The students who apply to the program will be required to take at least nine credits. Courses offered can be applied to both baccalaureate degree and elective requirements and include Italian language, Italian art history and contemporary Italian culture and civilization.

Katherine Wormhoudt, a University professor of art history

who has taught at Todi in previous summers, described the experience as "a serious program but very enjoyable." She said one of the advantages to studying abroad is the fact that it is easier to learn a language and to understand art and architecture when the students are living and learning in the environment they are studying.

Students interested in ceramics will be pleased to find that Todi has been one of the leading centers of this art for over 1,000 years. Much of this reputation has been gained in The Centro Internazionale Della Ceramica.

"It is a facility world-wide artists have come from," said Virgulti.

When asked if this summer's program will live up to its previous standards, Virgulti said, "It is a very humanistic experience and it will be even better this time around."

Only 20 students will be chosen for this summers program of study abroad in Todi, Italy. Those students interested in the program should contact Conference Coordinator Donna Ricketts by phoning 863-1743.