Talent in Action (Continued from preceding page)

musicians who have influenced him, notably John Coltrane, that was closer to mere imitation than to thoughtful emulation. But on balance, Marsalis’ set was well-paced, and the solos were both inventive and exciting.

The set featured a few selections from Marsalis’ latest Columbia album, “Royal Garden Blues,” including the title tune, a vintage jazz standard that Marsalis, playing soprano sax, managed to render with both modern harmonic ideas and reverence for tradition. He also offered a very effective rendition, on tenor of “Body and Soul”—which, primarily because of its identification with the great Coleman Hawkins, has long been considered a test piece for jazz saxophonists’ mettle. Marsalis passed the test.

Almost as impressive as Marsalis’ playing was that of his virtually unknown rhythm section. Pianist Julian Joseph, bassist Delbert Felix, and especially drummer Louis Nash offered solid support and made the most of their solo opportunities. The near-capacity crowd was noticeably impressed.

PETER KERRNnPS

BRUCE HORNSBY & THE RANGE

Bruce Hornsby & The Range opened for John Fogerty (Talent In Action, Sept. 27, 1986) at this recent show, but the new RCA signing should hardly have been considered a mere warm-up act; “The Way It Is” was comfortably ensconced at the top of the Hot 100 singles chart. With a 50-minute-plus-encore set, Hornsby qualified for billing status, and the familiar cries of “Brooce! Brooce!” at the set’s close (albeit for a different performer than usual) indicated that his upcoming headlining gigs will be equally well-received.

If Hornsby’s stage presence is reminiscent of that other Bruce, his set was unique in its passion and clarity. Hornsby’s modulated baby grand, with its custom Helpenstine pickup, sounded as precise on stage as it does on compact disc. His complex, almost jazzlike solo introduction to “The Way It Is” proved that he has more sophistication and range than might have been expected. The Appalachian influence in “On The Western Skyline,” a top album rock radio track, gave yet another dimension to the act.

“Just a couple of months ago we were at the Roxy,” said Hornsby. This night, he and his band—guitarists Peter Harris and George Marnell, bassist Joe Puerta, and drummer John Moio—received a spontaneous and sincere standing ovation from an audience of 6,000. Violinist David Mansfield (formerly of Dy- lan’s Rolling Thunder Revue) made an impressive guest appearance with the Range.

EVELYN ANN YARE

THE PAUL WINTER CONSORT

Cathedral New York

Tickets: $20, $17, $11

THE BUILDING was chilly and the concert was long, but the capaci ty audience—which consisted of almost equal portions of folks in jeans and the cost-of-the-set—easily got its money’s worth. Even without counting an intermission, the show clocked in at more than 2 1/2 hours.

Paul Winter is much more at ease in the performance environment than many new age artists, a reminder that he established a foundation for the genre long before the phrase “new age” was co-opted. Of course, the veteran saxophonist had reason to feel at home here, since St. John’s has been the recording site for most of his albums and several produced for other artists on the Living Music label—during the past seven years.

Volcanist Susan Osbourne’s cameo appearance added a surprising pop flair without detracting from the feeling of the program, which otherwise recalled the quiet, comfortable path Winter has followed since the release of early-70s “Le- carus” and “Something In The Wind.”

During the show, Winter noted that the venue is “essentially an unheated room,” but the mostly acous tic Consort—spiced by recorded whale songs and wolf cries and the gothic cathedral’s grand organ—created undeniable warmth.

GEOFF MAYFIELD

BILLY BRAGG

THE RAVE-UPS

The Roxy, Los Angeles, Calif.

Tickets: $12.50

BILLY BRAGG is something of an acquired taste. Standing alone on stage with an electric guitar, there isn’t much to shield the audience from his harsh voice and his political views—except, perhaps, his wit. Still, those fans who attended his two recent shows here wouldn’t want him any other way.

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