**Talent in Action**

JOHNNY MATHIS

**HANK MANCINI**

Radio City Music Hall, New York
Ticket: $80, $55, $20

**ATTENDANCE**

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**AT THIS TIME**

This, the first of a recent five-night engagement, Johnny Mathis and Henry Mancini made good on the promise of highly polished performances with music that was familiar, comfortable, and frequently romantic.

Impressive repertoire notwithstanding, it was also the same old plan that placed their talents in the best light. The format of the two-hour program shifted the spotlight several times between Mathis and Mancini, and ultimately they joined forces. Richly varied arrangements were to be expected, but the prudent running order of the material was an added, and critical, plus.

Mathis opened with "Like Someone In Love" which softly set the tone. Soon afterward fans were offered his "Chances Are" and "Wonderful, Wonderful" as a sort of musical encore. Throughout the evening, Mathis was in fine, relaxed form and his working of dynamics was especially impressive.

When Mathis turned the stage over to Mancini, the composer led his orchestra on a grand tour of his movie and television music and paid visits to some other writers as well. From "Charade" to "The Pink Panther" to "Peter Gunn" and John Barry's "Out Of Africa," there were all the Mancini trademarks—velvetey reeds, bright or pastel brass, jazz arrangements, strings, and a multitude of shifting orchestral textures—that livened the hall.

Mathis and Mancini teamed for dreamy renditions of "Moon River," "Way Down Yonder In The Dixie Land," and "Of The Water And Ours," complete with a backing vocal chorus, but it was an emotionally charged medley from "West Side Story" that proved to be the evening’s highlight. A definite "must" for any followup to the recent Mathis-Mancini "Hollywood Musicals" Columbia album, the medley allowed Mathis and orchestra room to fly. And so they did, drawing standing ovations from the crowd.

**BOB RIEDINGER**

**THE PRETENDERS**

Reunion Arena, Dallas
Ticket: $16.25

With IGGY POP as opening act (Talent In Action, Nov. 29, 1986), Chrissie Hynde and the Pretenders were primed for a strong draw at this Feb. 11 concert. Slow advance ticket sales, however, prompted the promoters to rent only half the house at Reunion Arena. And come concert night, large pockets of empty seats were still visible around the 9,000-capacity setup.

If that was not disheartening enough, sound problems marred the show, particularly for those seated in the balcony. Unfamiliar tunes from the Pretenders’ latest album, “Get Close,” remained unfamiliar except to listeners seated in the floor sections. Hynde became increasingly frustrated with the sound. After trying to play one of her guitars, which remained silent, she slammed it down on the keyboard platform.

But for the die-hard Pretenders audience, the evening brightened when the band struck up the more recognizable chords of “Middle Of The Road,” “Back On The Chain Gang," and “Time The Avenger.” Newer songs like “Don’t Get Me Wrong” and “Maya” were highlighted by a compatible light show. By the encore, "Brass In Pocket," the crowd had ceased to care so much about the sound system.

**CHARLENE ORR**

**Singer/Songwriter’s Hidden Hills Estate**

This long sought after estate also contains an exquisite master bedroom suite with adjacent study, a fully appointed country-style kitchen, a sunken formal living room with English fireplace, a pool, horse stables and a championship tennis court with viewing deck. Designed by Oren Harris, this magnificent home has been built with the finest craftsmanship and quality construction.

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