

Concert Review

Former student Lyle Lovett brings musical variety to the Woodlands

By GARY P. CARROLL  
City Editor of THE BATTALION

His musical style has been labeled as blues, jazz, country and new age country, but under a full moon Sunday night in The Woodlands, Lyle Lovett's performance was nothing short of magical.

Lovett, Class of '79, brought his "Joshua Judges Ruth" tour along with his unmistakable hair-do and suit-and-tie appearance to the Cynthia Woods Mitchell Pavilion and thoroughly impressed his hometown audience.

His Large Band, living up to its name with 14 band members, took the stage at 7:54 p.m. and by 7:55 it owned the audience.

Lovett was absent for the first number, a jazz review that featured solos from many of the band members. Then he casually strolled out and got things going with "Black and Blue" off the album "Pontiac."

"She Makes Me Feel Good," an upbeat, toe-tappin' song about women's idiosyncrasies, began a set of songs from his most recent release, "Joshua Judges Ruth."

He followed up with a new release tagged with a special dedication.

"I'd like to dedicate this next song ("She's Leaving Me Because She Really Wants To") to anyone in the audience who's ever been involved in a relationship that didn't quite work out the way you expected," Lovett said. "And to anyone who's tried to rationalize the reason for the break-up and hope the other person will live to regret it."

The crowd's mood seemed to be one of contentment and comfort. With the set "All My Love Is Gone" / "She's Already Made Up Her Mind" / "North Dakota," the audience was in awe. There was complete silence - you could have heard a marshmallow hit the grass. Lovett's soft melodic tone and soothing vibrato led the audience into a state of temporary musical nirvana.

Lovett came right back with a crowd favorite, "If I Had a Boat," followed by some "serious rationalization about the contemplation of the future of future and the last of the past" with "Good Intentions" from the album "Lyle Lovett and His Large Band."

All the regulars were there - James Gilmar on congas, Matt McKenzie on bass and John Hagen on cello - but this time Lovett had a few more friends with him.

The timely saxophone blasts of session greats Harvey Thompson and Steve Marsh punctuated "Fami-

ly Reserve," "M-O-N-E-Y," "Black and Blue," and "You've Been So Good Up To Now."

Back-up singer Wayne Murray took the audience by the ears on "Church" and, with a range higher than the Rocky Mountains, infused a little soul into everyone.

John Hagen wowed the crowd with a spectacular cello exhibition during "Good Intentions", but perhaps the most audibly appetizing arrangement of the evening (sorry Lyle) was Francine Reed's performance of the 1920s Ida Cox song "Wild Women Never Get The Blues."

Reed's energy stirred the crowd, and the robust, overpowering, down-home, arm-flailing, brow-wiping blues coming from the stage were more reminiscent of something you would hear at The Blue Note or The Village Vanguard in New York City.

"I'm gonna tell ya' somthin', and Francine don't lie," she said. "Wild women are always the first to fly!"

Lovett returned and calmly brought the crowd back into his fold with several more relaxing tunes before wrapping it up with "She's Hot To Go," "She's No Lady," "Here I Am," and a gospel song finish with his entire band and stage crew, "Do Not Pass Me By."

All in all, Lovett's 26-song performance was bril-



HUY NGUYEN/ THE BATTALION

Former Aggie Lyle Lovett performed at the Cynthia Mitchell Woods Pavilion Sunday Night.

liant. His delivery was crafty and his voice was unwavering. There may have been 10,000 people in the audience, but he sang to each individual.

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