

5B ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

'SPAWN' offers dazzling special effects, but little else. See page 6B.



SummerFest Artist Schedule

3:00-3:15	Sam Salter
3:15-3:30	Craig Mack
4:00-4:15	Rome
4:15-4:30	-702-
4:45-5:00	Tracey Lee
5:00-5:30	Rob Base
5:30-5:45	Adina Howard
6:00-7:00	Cameo
7:15-7:45	DaBrat, Jermaine Dupree & Jagged Edge
7:45-8:00	Joe
8:00-8:30	Doug E. Fresh
8:30-8:45	Dana Harris
8:45-9:15	Lil' Kim
9:30-10:15	Rum DMCπ
10:30-11:00	K-Ci & JoJo

SummerFest

This fest may be best

By Winfred B. Cross
THE CHARLOTTE POST

Blockbuster Pavilion will get a healthy dose of old and new school funk Saturday as WPEG's 3rd Annual SummerFest rolls into town.

The lineup includes new-school balladeers K-Ci and JoJo, Joe and Rome; hip-hop stars Da Brat and Jermaine Dupree; and old-school artists Cameo, Run-DMC and Doug E. Fresh.

"This is going to be as great, if not better than it's ever been," said Robb Ferguson, marketing and promotions director for WPEG. "Actually, tickets sales are ahead of where we were last year. With the tickets being reserved seating, people are willing to come check out the new arena."

The two previous SummerFests were held at Memorial Stadium downtown. The Blockbuster Pavilion is in northeast Mecklenburg, some 20 minutes away. That's made

the festival a bit inconvenient.

"I'm trying to contract a shuttle service from the Midtown area, maybe 1 - 5 p.m., then 8 - 9 p.m. bringing them back into the city," Ferguson said. "We're definitely keeping that in mind."

The change in venue also sent ticket prices soaring. The first festivals were in the \$10 range. Tickets for Saturday's show range from \$24 in the gold area (sold out) to \$14 for the lawn. Two dollar discount coupons can be found at area Chevrolet-Geo dealers, but they expire Friday.

Ferguson said working with the Pavilion has been a good experience.

"It's been great because it's a concert venue," Ferguson said. "It eliminates a lot of logistical problems. It's really been a pleasure."

There will also be food and beverages, product sampling, displays, African and African American artwork. The concert starts at 3 p.m., but doors open at 2 p.m.. Parking is plentiful, but costs \$5.



The Artist plays, the crowd sings at the Coliseum

By Winfred B. Cross
THE CHARLOTTE POST

So was The Artist's concert really the "Jam of the Year?"

If you were a true fan in the Charlotte Coliseum Saturday night, yes it was. Most of the crowd stood the entire night, screaming and singing along with nearly each song.

The Artist didn't look his age (late 30s). He twirled, dipped and pranced from side to side, leaping onto pianos and platforms. He didn't seem to be as intense as I've seen him, even a bit reserved. He did about a three-hour show in Maryland the night before. He may have been a tad tired.

The stage wasn't very elaborate. Gold Griffins were on each side. And a gold symbol (his name) hung in the rear from black curtains.

The concert opened with "Jam of the Year," from *Emancipation*, a sprawling 3-CD set released late last year. He stormed straight into a house

version of "Talking Loud and Saying Nothing," on which he worked the crowd into a near frenzy.

It exploded during "Purple Rain," performed way to early in the concert. There was no need for him to sing because the crowd knew each word and sang along - loudly. There wasn't a person seated. Everyone swayed with arms waving. The Artist was on his symbol-shaped guitar by this time. He played on a few other occasions, but most of the solos and rhythm parts were played by the New Power Generation, which featured women on lead and bass guitars.

The Artist switched between guitar, piano and synthesizer throughout the show. His guitar solos were the most thrilling. He delivered searing solo after solo on his songs and a curious mix of oldies, which included the Isley's "Shout," the Temptation's "The Way You Do The Things You Do" and James Brown's "I Got That Feeling."

There were other interesting



PHOTOS/MARK PENDERGRASS

The Artist threw the jam of the year in the Coliseum. He jumped from piano to platforms, spinning and twirling.

moments. His version of Joan Osborne's "One of Us" had the crowd singing again. It was sandwiched between a medley which included "Do Me Baby," "Scandalous" and "Adore" and the blatantly profane "Sexy MF." The artist sang all or parts of

about 23 songs, none of which came from his early LPs. Pity, "Soft and Wet," "I Wanna Be Your Lover" or "Why You Wanna Treat Me So Bad" would have been nice.

But what he sang was satisfactory. "Baby I'm A Star,"

Raspberry Beret," "The Most Beautiful Girl In The World" and "Sleep Around" were done with reckless abandon.

Kudos go out to his band, which was as tight as the outfit the bass player was wearing.

Some complained the show was

too short. The Artist played for about an hour and 45 minutes - long enough for me, but not enough for his screaming throng of fans.

The jam of the year? Maybe. But if it wasn't, it was close enough to the real thing.

Sounds

By Winfred B. Cross
THE CHARLOTTE POST

Joe
All That I Am
Joe, Larry Campbell, Rodney Jerkins, Gerald Levert, Edwin Nicholas and John Thompson, producers
Jive Records

☆☆☆

Joe Thomas was only 19 years old when he released his first CD some three years ago. As good as it was it went largely unnoticed. There were a lot of new singers at the time.

But while most of those singers have faded, Joe's

building steam. His new CD *All That I Am* certainly won't go unnoticed. It's one of the best CD's you are going to hear this year.

Why?

Because Joe is an expressive singer, one that knows how to sing and properly present a song. His tenor can explode at any time, caressing a lyric or hammering a phrase. But he chooses to use it as an instrument, not a weapon. Listen to him croon "All The Things (Your Man Won't Do)." He's sexy without being lewd, steamy without being offensive. His voice melts the lyrics as smoothly as chocolate mint in your mouth, only more tasty.

The CD focuses mostly on ballads, all of which are good. "The Love Scene" is the latest single and it's a killer - another opportunity for Joe to show his contemporaries how to deliver a song. "No One Else

Comes Close" is a bit sappy, but Joe handles the song with the right amount of restraint, not playing up to the grandiose string arrangement.

When Joe decides to get funky, he does so with flair. "Come Round" "Sanctified Girl (Can't Fight This Feeling)" and "You Should Have Told Me (You Had A Man)" are of the head-nodding variety, not all-out jams. Still, they would easily fit into radio play lists.

Daniel Winans
On The Inside
Daniel Winans, Gino Speight, Victor and Cedric Caldwell and Michael Wright, producers
Insync Records

☆☆☆ 1/2

See WINANS page 7B

