local news

'A Night With Janis Joplin' Is a Spiritual Journey Through the Blues

The performance stole a piece of audience members' hearts Tuesday night at The Sharon.

By KRISTEN FIORE

Daily Sun Staff Writer

Audience members sat down Tuesday night in The Sharon to enjoy the rich instrumentals and strong earthy vocals from the musical, "A Night with Janis Joplin.'

But they didn't stay sitting for long. By the end of the performance, nearly everyone was on their feet and dancing.

The musical was set up like a concert with Janis Joplin, played by Kelly McIntyre, reflecting on her life, her career and the music that inspired her between songs.

Mary and Boop Hanson, of the Village of Country Club Hills, came to the show dressed in tie-dye shirts. Mary went the extra measure, wearing long wavy hair, embroidered bell-bottom jeans, round sunglasses and peace sign earrings.

"I always sing Janis Joplin on karaoke," Mary said. "I am a Janis in my own way. She's my idol. She's everything I ever wanted to be."

While the show was a tribute to Joplin, it also was largely a tribute to the blues artists who inspired Joplin to create her own songs.

pants, long shirts and

flowy dresses with colorful

the Village of Pinellas, said

that they're from Chicago, and

"A Night with Janis Joplin"

is the best show they've

"It's dynamic, it's unbeliev-

able," Gloria said. "She sounds just like Janis did. I saw Janis

Joplin years ago in the 60s and

Peter thought that the

"Have you ever seen so many

While the first half of the

McIntyre, her background

singers and her eight-

instrument band performed

show was about the music that inspired Joplin, the second half

was all about her own music.

crowd's enthusiasm showed

Villagers stand up during a

she sounds just like her."

how good the show was.

show?" he said.

Gloria and Peter Amber, of

psychedelic patterns.

ever seeen.

Artists like Etta James, Odetta, Bessie Smith, Aretha Franklin and Nina Simone stepped out of the shadows and performed their own songs throughout the show.

Ella Fitzgeralds's "Summertime" was performed and transitioned into Joplin's 'Summertime."

McIntyre gave a raw performance. Her vocals were unbelievably strong, and Joplin's character seemed to shine through her as she talked to the audience and took swigs from a bottle between songs. She got into the performance. kicking and punching the air while her long hair blazed behind her.

The whole cast wore outfits true to the time—bell-bottom



The musical "A Night with Janis Joplin" hit the stage Tuesday night at The Sharon. The production tells the story of Joplin's life and musical influence.

songssuch as "Piece of My Heart," "Maybe," "Me and Bobby McGee," "Ball and Chain" and "Stay with Me."

In between songs, she spoke about memories from being a kid and doing chores while listening to her mother's broadway records to joining Big Brother and the Holding Company and moving to California.

Toward the end of the show, she expressed concerns about staying true to herself and even spoke ironically about death before singing, "I'm Gonna Rock My Way to Heaven."

But it wasn't melancholy at all. The audience was standing up, clapping and dancing.

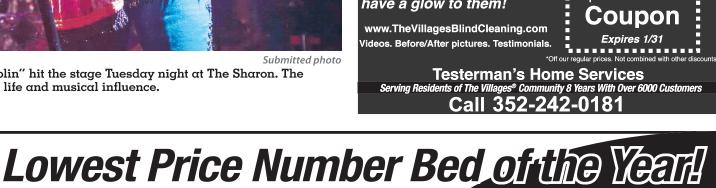
This show is transforming us back in time, and that's what everyone here needs," Gloria said.

Kristen Fiore is a staff writer with The Villages Daily Sun. She can be reached at 352-753-1119, ext. 5270, or kristen.fiore@ thevillagesmedia.com.

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