

# Talent

## Janis Joplin Jolts, Jars, Jells

NEW YORK—Janis Joplin, that bawdy bundle of blues power, touched off a highly combustible brew of Southern Comfort and soul Tuesday (11) at Fillmore East when she featured her brand-new band—and plenty of her old, beautiful corruption—during her two-day return to the stage. The Grateful Dead,

Warner Brothers group and pop patriarchs of the San Francisco sound, were sacrificed as bait for the evening's main attraction.

Screaming like a crosscut saw biting into mahogany, Miss Joplin fattened her legend every time she hitched her drooping tights, choked the microphone

or shimmied a hallelujah to her guitarist Sam Andrew, a leftover from the defunct Big Brother group.

Her dark, raw oaths, burning up lyrics like dry leaves in flash-fires of depression, love and love's agony, turned "Maybe," "To Love Somebody," several Nick Gravenites tunes and "Piece of My Heart," into intense, bleeding invocations to pagans, demons, bad luck and hard-loving losers. Still, her mighty voice, raised in stormy defiance of almost every social convention, seemed to turn anguish into triumph by the sheer size of her lust and laughter. Ironically, only her uniqueness—her existential aloneness as one woman singing hard about the survival of the blues—keeps her odes to pain's pleasure from becoming a mod manifesto.

An iconoclast with a voice big enough and a manner bold enough to illustrate her message ("You know you got it—if it makes you feel good.")—Janis Joplin's return to the stage, and on records with Columbia, should swell her legend until she can either no longer live what she sings about, or until her vocal chords drop out of her body like charred remains from a memorable, old blaze.

ED OCHS

## TOMORROW

By ED OCHS

Live at Fillmore

For tourists in search of atmosphere, Fillmore East is not exactly "the leading East Village show place," though it is a musical landmark. No longer a creative element in rock, the fare has been boiled down to you pay your money you get your three acts. This way to the egress. Street people droop and cavort, straddle the curb and navigate the sidewalk at various speeds. Spar 'nextra ticket? Worn wooden horses process patrons like a crude computer. You step inside the Fillmore from the plain lobby, like checking into an old hotel and passing through the lounge. Ahead, beyond the perch of the back wall record people peer into the black interior and finally to the front where people are moved down and crowded together by the stage. You look around you at the cloudy faces, and when you have been captured enough, reached the threshold, the quota of racket or repetition, then you realize you must go. Others are hardier and put in a full limit, jamming the Fillmore to the last seat in the balcony. Bill Graham provided only one stage on which Janis Joplin was presented, performed and was paid royally. There are hundreds of stages across the country, and you can see something, whatever you want, from any seat in the house.

Dead in Hollywood

Dressed down for the last time in a short nightgown, sad silks for a night alone in bed, her nakedness meaningless to bare now. . . . Blinded by the glare of plainness, the surgical point attracting the vein, ready to pop! What? Grimacing, pink lady hammering a rusty nail into her arm. . . . Curled down within herself, relieved of a fever that was herself, swallowed up, she could not remember any other sorrow because this different grief wiped them all away. She stretched herself upright to put out the light. And when they found her—the band's road manager and the manager of the Landmark Motor Hotel—she had fallen off the bed, face-down, crumpled between the nighttable and the bed. The fall, deceptively jarry, broke her nose and split her lip, but it didn't really matter. She was already dead anyway. The newspapers said she had some money in her hand, change, but it wasn't ransom enough, and she paid royally and got a few gold records, the industry's gold watch signaling short service to the company.

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