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MARLBORO MUSIC FESTIVAL
HOUSTON, TEXAS
JULY 1990

Submitted by:
Mary Jo Gennaro
Carolyn McClair

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I. INTRODUCTION

During the month of July, Marlboro Music presented a series of concerts in Houston emphasizing "Country music like you've never heard it before". The goal of the Marlboro Music Festival was to broaden Marlboro's music audience beyond country music by presenting a variety of music styles stemming from country roots, without losing our equity in country music. The objectives of the Festival were:

- A. To reach male consumers 21-35 in a smoker friendly atmosphere.
- B. To reinforce Marlboro as an innovative leader in music.
- C. To broaden our "scope" of music events to reach a wider audience.

II. THE PROGRAM

The aim of the Marlboro Music Festival was to have a continued presence in the Houston market during the entire month of July. This "blitz" was achieved by Marlboro Music through 3 types of events. The program was launched with 8 Wild West Video parties over the first two weekends. It continued with the Marlboro Talent Roundup competition (3 semifinals and one final). The Festival consisted of 8 concert events at various clubs featuring a range of country music styles in addition to a Songwriters workshop/concert and a Guitar workshop/concert.

Program Elements (Brand Visibility)

The musicians performed in front of a backdrop with the Marlboro Music logo which covered the entire back wall of the stage. Marlboro Music banners and posters were placed around the clubs. Electronic message centers with programmed concert information were placed at each venue for the entire month of July. Sampling backdrops with the

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Marlboro Music logo were produced to be used at all events but were damaged upon arrival. The loss of these backdrops hindered our visibility at the clubs. Additionally, each venue received Marlboro bar kits, napkins and cups.

Sales Force

The Sales Force distributed Festival and TRU brochures and posters to all participating clubs and at retail. Sampling was done by the Sales Force at all TRU events. Phoenix Marketing sampled at all concert and TRU venues during the entire month of July. The Sales Force hosted a hospitality event for customers and media at the final concert.

Members of the Sales Force expressed concerns about their participation in the program. The time required to place and remove signage at each club in addition to placing posters/brochures at retail and sampling at the 4 Talent Roundup events was time consuming and took away from "sales activities".

The Sales Force did not sufficiently understand the roles of the 3 vendors hired to implement the program which resulted in some confusion when logistic problems arose.

Publicity

Local press coverage for the Marlboro Music Festival was phenomenal. The press turned out in full force to do advance features, calendar listings and reviews of the concerts. Columnists were pleased with the artist and venue selections and in general, they felt the Festival was an event not to be missed.

Included in the coverage were a substantial number of color covers, feature spreads and reviews. The Chronicle sent reviewers to every show and in most cases, a photographer was on hand. Other major papers, The Post and The Press, sent reviewers and photographers on all but two nights -- the guitar workshop/concert and the blues show. In addition, major dailies as far away as Austin wrote pieces on the Festival.

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Television shows, "Good Morning Houston" and "Viva Houston", aired three interviews, including Rodney Crowell, Joe Ely, Flaco Jimenez and Emilio Navaira. The Spanish TV and radio stations also covered the Tex-Mex night thoroughly. Both country radio stations reported on the events.

Trade publications also jumped on the bandwagon to write advance pieces. Included were Billboard, Amusement Business, Radio and Records, and Performance.

Instead of holding a press conference to announce the Marlboro Music Festival, we secured advance publicity by hosting intimate lunches and dinners with major print and broadcast journalists. Because the format of the program is new, we wanted to talk directly to the media to assure them that we were not turning our backs on country music, country artists or the roots of our successful seven-year venture with the Country Music Tour. Thus, we held four media get-togethers--two in Houston and two in Nashville--to allow Susan Charney, Bill Ivey and the Network Ink publicist to position the 1990 Marlboro Music program as a strong, positive, step ahead. Meeting with these journalists on their own turf gave us the opportunity to explain the program in-depth, answer comprehensive questions and establish good relationships that resulted in solid coverage and support. We have already begun pulling together lists to invite media representatives in Atlanta.

Advertising

Print ads for the Marlboro Music TRU and Marlboro Music Festival ran weekly in the Houston Chronicle, Houston Press, Houston Post and Public News. Because of the similarity of the Festival and TRU ads, there was some confusion in differentiating between the two programs. This situation can be rectified by changing the layouts so that each ad has a distinct visual style.

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III. ANALYSIS

The following analysis addresses the objectives and elements of the Festival program.

- A. The first objective of reaching adult male consumers was achieved by offering a variety of concerts reflecting musical styles ranging from Southern Rock, Cajun, Rockabilly to Country Blues. Marlboro has developed a reputation over the past 7 years as a leader in combining talent that not only reflects the roots and traditions of country but also anticipates new trends. In this way we have been on the cutting edge of country music by presenting future stars who will develop with our program. By pairing artists like Carl Perkins with Foster & Lloyd, Flaco Jimenez with Emilio Navairo and Zachary Richard with Jo-El Sonnier - we created a "magic" that made each event unique. Because of the wide variety of music events available in the market place it is key to our success to present, to our male audience, concerts that will be viewed as "one of a kind".
- B. Marlboro Music is the first and only sponsor to present a Festival of Country Music. The Songwriters and Guitar Workshop/Concerts are examples of how Marlboro Music continues to explore novel ways of featuring artists. These Workshop/Concerts were extremely well received and furthered our commitment to excellence in the music industry.
- C. Working with the Country Music Foundation enables us to expand our audience with themed events, drawing on a different audience for each concert. With our Texas night we were able to represent the local community and also reach a minority audience by featuring an evening of regional Tex-Mex music.
- D. The excellent press received on the Festival generated favorable publicity for Marlboro and reinforced our visibility in Houston during July. By expanding the range of concerts we were able to reach Pop, Rock and Hispanic critics in addition to country press.

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The recommendations made in the Dave Edmunds' Revue analysis have proven to be successful. By "owning" the Festival project we had total control over selection of artists and venues. Artist selection was made in conjunction with the Country Music Foundation to ensure our credibility and appeal against Marlboro demographics and imagery. Our promoter, Metropolitan Entertainment, then advised us on possible venues and whether or not our concerts would sell tickets. Venues selected ranged from smoker friendly clubs of 750 capacity to small theatres of 1,500 which provided an atmosphere of intimacy which was most suitable to our concerts. It is important that the relationship between Marlboro Music, the CMF and Metropolitan Entertainment furthers the goals of the program. This collaboration is still in its early stages and we need to clearly define each member's role and improve communication.

IV. RECOMMENDATIONS

- Enhance the program through tie-in retail promotions such as Marlboro Music t-shirts, cassettes, tickets to events, etc.
- Consider timing of Festival carefully. Summer offers consumers an abundance of concert events and therefore makes it a competitive concert atmosphere.
- Examine our current format of presenting 8 concerts in a row. We may be overwhelming our audience with concert options not to mention the expense. Consumers will not attend all events, but if we present concerts on long weekends only (Thurs. - Sat.) during a one month period our audience is more likely to attend more than one or two events.
- Consider the sophistication of the music audience in each Festival market and the effect on ticket sales. The concept of a Country Music Festival is new and it will take time to develop an audience who will appreciate the range of events offered. Therefore by changing the current week long format to weekends we give our audience more time to appreciate each concert.

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- Continue the TRU program to generate excitement in the music community and to maintain Marlboro's leadership in the music industry at the grassroots level.
- We are introducing a new category of music in the Fall Talent Roundup competition. The addition of the Adult Contemporary and Folk category expands our audience appeal at the grassroots level. As this new element of TRU grows, so will our opportunities to present a wider range of music to our consumers.
- The Video Nights were successful in and of themselves, drawing a large number of consumers but did not enhance the Festival or encourage consumers to attend the Festival. The Video Parties confused our consumers and did not achieve the goals of Marlboro Music.
- We need more visibility prior to the Festival. This can be achieved by producing posters with enough lead time to have them prominently displayed at retail. We should also increase the number of banners at each venue.
- Prior to the launch of the Program, arrange a meeting with the appropriate Sales Force personnel, Marlboro Music staff and any vendors we will be using to fully discuss all aspects of the program. This gives us the opportunity to answer in advance questions regarding the program and will aid in handling situations that may occur during the program.

Popular Marlboro arena tours replaced with a series of more intimate concerts

ROBERT K. OERMANN

Staff Writer 77600

The deluxe Marlboro Country Music arena tours that boosted country's popularity for the past six years are being replaced by a more intimate concert series coordinated by Nashville's Country Music Foundation.

The CMF and Marlboro announced yesterday that they'll present 1990 festivals in Houston and Atlanta. Such stars as Chet Atkins, Carl Perkins, Jo-Ei Sonnier, Rodney Crowell, Kathy Mattea and Lyle Lovett will be presented in shows saluting various styles of country-related roots music.

"Beginning in 1984, Marlboro Country Music was one of the pioneers in bringing country music artists to the arena level," said Marlboro spokesman Susan Charney yesterday. "A lot of other people started copying the arena-tour country package concept. 'We wanted to stay on the cutting edge.'"

The cigarette manufacturer began discussions last year with the CMF,

which operates the Country Music Hall of Fame and Museum.

Songwriter concerts and workshops they jointly produced in New York and Chicago late in 1989 were resounding successes, leading to the full-time relationship announced yesterday.

CMF executive director Bill Ivey described the venture as "an unusual creative relationship between an arts organization and a sponsor."

The CMF is chartered as an educational institution and operates a library, audio archive, audio restoration lab, education program, publications division and reissue record label in addition to its museum on Music Row. Ivey said its role with Marlboro was to act as a consultant for the upcoming multi-date festivals.

The new Marlboro Music series will present thematically-linked artists in prestigious venues that don't usually book country shows. The aim, Charney and Ivey said, is to expose listeners to country and its related styles in an innovative and "intellec-

tually credible" way.

For instance, revered Latino stylists Flaco Jimenez, Emilio Navaira and the Texas Tornados will be spotlighted in an evening called "Southern Border Night." Jo-Ei Sonnier and Zachary Richard are being co-billed for "Cajun Night." "Rockabilly Night" will feature the style's pioneer Carl Perkins along with newcomers Foster & Lloyd.

Two separate strains of Southern rock 'n' roll will be featured in the pairing of Joe Ely and Webb Wilder. Kathy Mattea will headline a "Folk Night" package. "Texas Music Night" will feature Lone Star State stylists Rodney Crowell and Darden Smith. A musical concept called "Country Blues" links Delbert McClinton with Waylon Jennings in Houston and with Merle Haggard in Atlanta.

"We're giving people who don't listen to country music a chance to," Charney said. "It's country music like you've never heard it before."

Turn to PAGE 5D, Column 1

TENNESSEAN
NASHVILLE, TENN.

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JUN 23 1990
BURRELLE'S



Chet Atkins
"Guitar Night"



Waylon Jennings
"Country Blues"



Rodney Crowell
"Texas Night"



Mary-Chapin Carpenter
"Songwriters Night"

Concert series aims to reach out to new listeners

FROM PAGE 1D

The "Songwriters Night" packages that were so popular last year are returning.

"These are not unusual in Nashville, but they're highly unusual in the cities we chose," Ivey said.

In Houston, Guy Clark, John Hiatt,

Joe Ely and Mary-Chapin Carpenter will star. In Atlanta, songs will be swapped by Clark, Hiatt, Lyle Lovett and John Prine.

Similar in concept are the two "Guitar Nights" being planned with Chet Atkins, Larry Carlton, Albert Lee and Earl Klugh.

Both the songwriter and guitar

shows will be preceded by free afternoon workshops where aspiring musicians can question the stars and have composing or picking techniques demonstrated. Ivey will moderate these educational sessions.

Scattered in the festivals will be Marlboro's annual Talent Roundup search for new country acts. The

Houston festival runs July 4-28 for 14 dates. The 12 Atlanta shows are planned for October 3-27.

As with all Marlboro events since 1987, \$1 from each ticket sold benefits Second Harvest Food Banks. To date, Marlboro Country Music has contributed \$820,000 to the charity. ■

Marlboro Music '90 Searches For The Music Stars Of Tomorrow

The Marlboro Music Talent Roundup, a series of talent competitions highlighting the best and the brightest musical talent from across the country, is expanding this year to 16 cities nationwide. The competition will not only search for promising country music acts, but will also include a separate adult contemporary/folk competition for those up-and-coming artists reaching for the stars.

The competitions offer two winners a chance to win a grand prize of \$30,000 and 40 hours of recording time at Omni Sound Studios in Nashville with Grammy-winning producer, Barry Beckett. Beckett, has produced material for Alabama, Etta James, Bob Dylan and Hank Williams Jr., among others.

Country music competitions will be held this July in Baton Rouge, La.; Louisville, Ky.; Shreveport, La.; Knoxville, Tenn.; Charleston, S.C.; Houston; Dallas; and Richmond, Va.

The adult contemporary/folk artists will compete in October in Toledo, Ohio; Grand Rapids, Mich.; Detroit; Indianapolis; Winston-Salem, N.C.; Philadelphia; New York; and Atlanta.

The talent roundup competitions are open to all solo artists or bands in participating cities who do not have a major record label contract. All entrants must be over 21. To enter, artists must submit a cassette tape of at least three songs. After the tapes are screened by an independent panel of judges, semifinalists are chosen to compete in live performances. Three artist and repertoire (A&R) representatives from major record companies will be flown in to judge each regional final and then go on to judge the national finals in Nashville.

Winners of the regional competitions will receive \$7,500, with awards of \$3,000 and \$1,000 going to the second and third place bands.

The 16 regional winners then advance to the national competitions in Nashville, Dec. 6 (country music) and Dec. 7 (adult contemporary/folk). Marlboro Music will also host a comprehensive workshop conducted by a panel of music industry professionals, including lawyers, producers, and managers, who will offer the national finalists expert advice and answer their questions.

"Marlboro Music is committed to providing up-and-coming musical acts the chance to succeed in the music industry," says Susan Charney, manager, Marlboro Music. "This year, by expanding to include a contest featuring adult contemporary/folk, we are offering a chance at stardom to a wider variety of talented performers."

Winners from the first two national talent roundup competitions are examples that with

the right support and guidance, local bands can gain notoriety in the music industry. Since winning last year's talent roundup, Angel Train, hailing from Kittery, Maine, has experienced an upswing in its career. The band will be featured on the Marlboro Music Tour this summer, entertaining U.S. servicemen and women nationwide along with headliners, Poco and 38 Special.

The 1988 national winner, Ronnie Dunn, toured last year with the Marlboro Music Military Tour, playing with Alabama, Ricky Skaggs and Kathy Mattea. He has received interest from several record companies as a result of the demo tape he cut with Beckett. In addition, Asleep at the Wheel has recorded Dunn's song, "Boot Scoot Boogie" for an

upcoming album.

Musical and/or vocal ability, originality of arrangements, original composition, choice of material, stage presence, audience response, and a sense of professionalism are the criteria by which Marlboro Talent Roundup entrants will be judged.

The adult contemporary/folk category runs the spectrum of diverse musical styles — from Tracy Chapman to Cher to Billy Joel to Poco. It does not include heavy metal, hard rock or rap music.

The country music category includes Cajun, bluegrass and southern rock music styles — from Jo-el Sonnier to New Grass Revival and Southern Pacific to Alabama.

Throughout the year, Marlboro Music will continue to present a variety of musical events. In addition to the Talent Roundup competitions, Marlboro Music will tour 10 U.S. military bases and present music festivals in Houston and Atlanta in coming months.

PERFORMANCE MAGAZINE
JUNE 29, 1991

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Billboard

JULY 7, 1990

Marlboro Opts For Festival Series *Will Offer Workshops, Vid Parties, Too*

NASHVILLE—Marlboro will forsake its lavish country music arena tour this year in favor of a series of more intimate, genre-specific music festivals. The monthlong festivals will be held in Houston in July and Atlanta in October. In addition to regular shows, the festivals will also include free songwriting and guitar-playing workshops and music video parties to increase participant involvement.

Susan Charney, manager of Marlboro Music, concedes that the new format will cost the company less than the superstar-heavy promotions of the past. But she adds that this is a natural consequence of switching program types—not a lessening of the tobacco company's

commitment to country music.

Nashville's Country Music Foundation, a nonprofit educational organization and operator of the Country Music Hall Of Fame, will be given a grant and a consulting fee from Marlboro for helping design this year's promotion.

Last year's nine-date arena tour involved Alabama, Ricky Skaggs, Barbara Mandrell, Kathy Mattea, Ricky Van Shelton, Highway 101, Restless Heart, Merle Haggard, and George Strait.

Headliners for the 1990 festivals are Joe Ely and Webb Wilder, representing Southern rock; Carl Perkins and Foster & Lloyd, rockabilly; Joel Sonnier and Zachary Richard, Cajun; Flaco Jimenez and Emilio Navaira, Southern border; Rodney Crowell and Darden Smith, Texas music; Waylon Jennings, Merle

Haggard, and Delbert McClinton, country blues; and Kathy Mattea, folk.

Guy Clark, John Hiatt, Joe Ely, Mary-Chapin Carpenter, Lyle Lovett, and John Prine will teach the songwriting workshops. Chet Atkins, Larry Carlton, Albert Lee, and Earl Klugh will conduct the guitar workshops.

The "Wild West Video Parties" are held at clubs to help drum up interest for the concerts. Clubgoers will be encouraged to sing to prerecorded tracks and have free music videos made of their performances.

Concurrent with these other activities, the company will be conducting regional finals for the Marlboro Music Talent Roundup.

Information on all aspects of the promotions is available from 1-800-637-6560.

Crowd dances night away with Jimenez, Navaira

BY CLAUDIA PERRY
POST POP MUSIC CRITIC

LIKE EVERYTHING else in Texas, *tejano* music is a spicy concoction.

At the Tower Theatre Tuesday night, Flaco Jimenez and Emilio Navaira gave a short lesson in *la onda tejana* to those who don't know the life. Those who do

just danced the night away.

With Navaira, who was nominated for a Grammy last

year for best Mexican-American album, and Jimenez, whose recent association with the Texas Tornados has increased his already formidable national reputation, you heard the best of the music's past, present and future.

Navaira and his band are amazingly versatile. Navaira delivered "If Tomorrow Never Comes" with convincing emotion before he and the band segued to a *paqueta* number, which was quite lively. Navaira

FLACO JIMENEZ

The Texas accordion master played at the Tower Theatre Tuesday night. Emilio Navaira and the Rio Band opened the show. Band personnel: Emilio Navaira (vocals, guitar), Frankie Gabriel (keyboards), Henry Esquivel (guitar), Pete Vara (accordion), Albert Casanova (drums), Raul Navaira (congas) and George Esquivel (bass). Presented by PACE Concerts and the Marlboro Music Festival.

comes from the generation that's as at home with George Strait as La Mafia.

Navaira's Spanish ballads are just as moving as his Anglo country tunes. "No Se Porque" and "Mi Querido es Mi Vida" were dramatic and passionate. Some people seated in the wilds of the chilly Tower sang along with both.

For those who might think *tejano* music is all roller-rink bounciness, Navaira and the Rio Band offered a contrasting view. Facets of *tejano* include the achingly sentimental ballads in the *ranchera* tradition as well as more upbeat

ers and Doug Sahm would drop by, but, hey, these are musicians we're talking about. Meyers, Jimenez, Sahm and Freddy Fender kick off the Texas Tornados tour in San Antonio Saturday.

The only thing that marred the evening were long delays at the start of the night and between bands. People who favor *la onda* have day jobs just like anyone else, and they might have liked to be home close to midnight.

It's also hoped that it won't take an outside corporate sponsor for *tejano* shows to turn up at venues such as the Tower. If the logjam on the dance floor was any indication, *la onda* could be ready to wash us away as has zydeco, reggae and any other regional or international music.

norteno, *paqueta* and *cumbia* styles. Your feet don't have to speak Spanish to recognize what makes each style compelling. In fact, that *norteno* backbeat must have slipped into Louisiana while no one was looking because some of those tunes are reminiscent of zydeco in the way they lope along.

As for Jimenez's set, the only barrier to enjoyment was exhaustion. Your writer left after 16 songs, and the dancers were still twirling past the stage. Among the highlights were Augie Meyers' "Hey Baby (Que Paso)" and "Open Up Your Heart and Let My Love Come In."

Jimenez is a marvelous performer who is equally at home with blues, all facets of *tejano* and stone country. It was rumored that Mey-



Marlboro Music Festival

Waylon Jennings, above, and Del-
bert McClinton cap off the Marlboro
Music Festival at 8 p.m. today at Wil-
lie's Night Life, 921 FM 1960 West.
For tickets or more information, call
580-5638.

Houston Chronicle

Friday, July 20, 1990



Country fest

Marlboro Festival to
feature eight major
concerts, talent roundup
Weekend Preview

Saturday, July 21, 1990

Houston Chronicle



✓ **Marlboro Music Festival**

The Marlboro Music Festival heats up with "Southern Rock Night" at 7:30 tonight at the Tower Theater,

1201 Westheimer; phone 520-9335. Joe Ely, left, and Webb Wilder will share the billing. Tickets are \$16.

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Houston Chronicle
Section D ☆
Monday, July 23, 1990

Songwriters share magic at festival

BY MARTY RACINE
Houston Chronicle

Joe Ely finds it a challenge to drive and jot down song ideas.

So does John Hiatt.

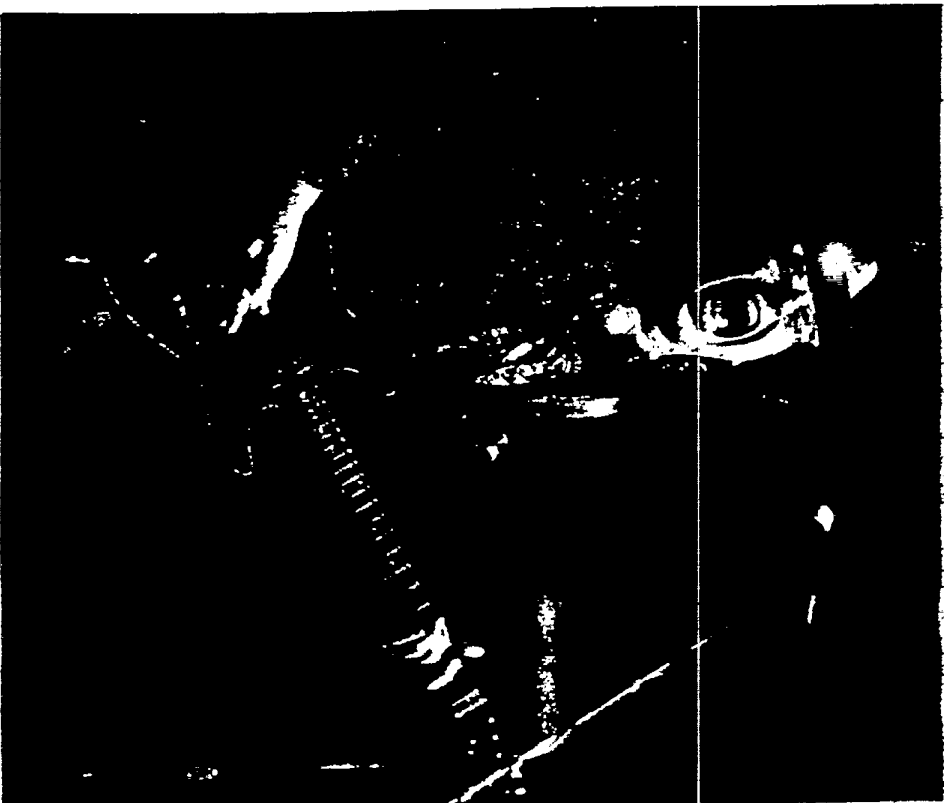
"Then we better not be driving on the same road," Hiatt quipped at a Tower Theater workshop Friday that kicked off the weeklong Marlboro Music Festival.

Instead, the two songsters traveled the same stage that also included Guy Clark and Mary Chapin Carpenter. The free workshop and a later concert, each before several hundred fans, provided moments of pure magic.

Instead of individual sets, the four sat simultaneously onstage with acoustic guitars and traded songs during the workshop and concert. It was a back-porch picking session among equals, and the mutual respect arced like lightning. From left to right: Hiatt, the prankster with a voice from somewhere deep in the Tennessee hills; Ely, the black-clad West Texas cool dude; Carpenter, the folksy newcomer with a ringing voice; Clark, the chain-smoking salt of the Earth in a blue work shirt.

Perhaps the most sublime moment of the entire evening appeared like the ghost of an old

See FEST on Page 4D.



David Fehleson / Chronicle

Webb Wilder filled the Tower Theater with streamlined rockabilly boogie Saturday night as part of the Marlboro Music Festival.

The Houston Post
July 20

Foster and Lloyd and Carl Perkins — The youngsters have a feel for a mix of rock and country that recalls the Everly Brothers as much as the dBs. Perkins was one of the original chefs of that recipe. At Fitzgerald's Sunday.

— CLAUDIA PERRY
Post Pop Music Critic

Songwriters Workshop and Concert — Jimmy Carter's fireside chats can't hold a candle to this collection of songwriters, who'll no doubt share their secrets — not to mention songs — much more readily than any head of state. Guy Clark, Joe Ely, Mary-Chapin Carpenter and John Hiatt will circle the chairs for the opening night of the Marlboro Music Festival. Workshop at 5 p.m. tonight at the Tower Theatre. Concert at 7:30 p.m.

— TIM CARMAN

Joe Ely — Can we ever get enough? No way. With Webb Wilder, the last of the full-grown men, for the Southern Rock portion of the Marlboro Music Festival. At the Tower Theatre Saturday.

Weekend music scene



Carl Perkins still rocks like a teen-ager.



John Hiatt, the Zeus of pop songwriters.



Foster and Lloyd make an almost perfect pairing with Carl Perkins. At Fitzgerald's Sunday.

WEEKEND

Preview

Houston Chronicle
Section E
Friday, July 20, 1990

TALENT ROUNDUP

Carl Perkins, above, will perform Sunday as part of the Marlboro Music Festival, while Joe Ely, right, will be among the headliners tonight and Saturday at the Tower Theater.

Festival shows
the many faces
of country music

By MARTY RACINE
Houston Chronicle

THE concept of corporate sponsorship isn't without controversy in the pop music industry.

But whether it ultimately serves or compromises the music, sponsorship has helped defray touring costs for some of America's most important acts.

The most entrenched corporate game plan has been the Miller Genuine Draft Band Network, which lends tour and promotional support for top fledgling roots-style groups that otherwise might go wanting for exposure.

Another inroad for corporations is the annual concert festival. Among the better known are the KOOL Jazz Festival and the Marlboro Music Festival. The latter opens a nine-day run today with events at Houston's Tower Theater.

Unlike past Marlboro Festivals, which were held on one night at a single location (The Summit in Houston), this year's event will feature eight major concerts and a

See FESTIVAL on Page 10E.



Joe Ely will be featured in a Monday festival performance.

Festival a genuine talent roundup

Continued from Page 1E.

regional battle-of-the-bands Talent Roundup at area clubs and theaters, plus other events.

More important, the festival is showing a new sophistication about country's role in American popular music, and, in fact, the entire enterprise is a talent roundup.

The Marlboro folks aren't smoking anything funny by recognizing country music as more than that which is officially sanctioned on radio — in other words, Nashville-owned and -operated. Beyond the mainstream, this year's festival sets aside whole concerts celebrating such tributaries as singer/songwriter music, Southern rock, rockabilly, Cajun, country-blues, Tex-Mex and a peculiar side-stream of country simply known as Texan.

And since song-craft doesn't exist in a vacuum, two concerts — the songwriters' and guitarists' — will be preceded by free workshops.

Festival highlights are:

■ Today: 5 p.m. workshop, 7:30 p.m. concert at the Tower Theater, 1201 Westheimer (520-9335), with Guy Clark, Joe Ely, John Hiatt and Mary Chapin Carpenter.

This promises to be an intimate evening of songs and stories by four of America's best songsters.

Clark brings a humble dignity to country-folk, having penned such '70s hits as *Desperadoes Waiting for a Train* and *LA Freeway*, both popularized by Jerry Jeff Walker. His recent collaborations have been *She's Crazy for Leaving*, which Rodney Crowell took to No. 1, and *Heartbroke*, one of Ricky Skaggs' signature tunes. Clark's own new album is *Old Friends*, a rough-hewn piece of simplicity and directness that earned a Grammy nomination this year.

After 10 years of swamping Houston with concert appearances, Ely has inherited the unofficial Texas Favorite Son status from Townes Van Zandt. Raised in Lubbock, hardened by the road and challenged by Austin, Ely's windswept honky-tonk tales travel a country mile with a whistle stop at the junction of rock 'n' roll — the same type of edgy soul-searching at the crossroads that made fellow Lubbockian Buddy Holly's music so historically significant. While Ely usually tours with his rocking band, he is equally compelling as a solo acoustic artist.

Like Ely, Hiatt isn't to be confined by musical boundaries. A Nashville resident, Hiatt was born in Indiana and made his first tenuous marks in Los Angeles as a songwriter whose works were recorded by such diverse artists as Bob Dylan, Three Dog Night and the Neville Brothers. After years of false starts, substance abuse and an unfocused image in the image-conscious recording industry, Hiatt has cleaned up and made the most mature work of his career: the new *Stolen Moments*, preceded by his breakthrough album, *Bring the Family*. Talent and perseverance have positioned this artist for the '90s.

Closer to orthodox country, Mary Chapin Carpenter is a relative newcomer whose second album, *State of the Heart*, has yielded three Top 20 country singles. That was enough to earn the husky-voiced New Jersey native an Academy of Country Music Award for 1990 Top New Female Vocalist.

■ Saturday: 7:30 p.m. concert at the Tower Theater, with Ely and Webb Wilder.

Dubbed as "Southern Rock Night," this excellent, complementary billing will burn with a maniacal intensity. Compared to today's country-folk set, Ely will rock out here with his hot-rod band, which includes one of the best lead guitarists in rock, David Grissom. Look for full-throttle versions of *Lord of the Highway*, *Dig All Night* and, hopefully, *My Baby Thinks She's French*.

Wilder is a Mississippi native, Nashville resident and one of rock's true characters; he understands the loony side of rockabilly. Calling himself "the last of the full-grown men," Wilder — with his band featuring Donny "The Twangler" Roberts, Jimmy Lester and Cletus Wollensack — plays a wild, crazy yet tuneful brand of gonzo country-rock



Mary Chapin Carpenter will be among the performers at the Marlboro Music Festival.

with a detour into sci-fi. The result is a classic style of rock (as opposed to "classic rock"), exemplified by the cult album *It Came From Nashville*.

■ Sunday: 9 p.m. concert at Fitzgerald's, 2706 White Oak (862-3838), with Carl Perkins and Foster & Lloyd.

This "Rockabilly Night" is at least half-accurate in description because of the presence of Perkins, the legendary bopper who was a member of the original Sun Records stable of early rockers that included Elvis, Johnny Cash, Roy Orbison and Jerry Lee Lewis. These were the point men of an era that would irrevocably change the course of post-World War II American pop. History always seemed to conspire against Perkins, however. His *Blue Suede Shoes* was a bigger hit for Presley, and his compositions of *Honey Don't*, *Matchbox* and *Everybody's Trying to Be My Baby* were better known through the Beatles, who openly credited Perkins as an influence. At 58, Perkins is more than a retread; he's still making vital music.

Foster & Lloyd burst on the scene in '87 with a seamless blend of country and rock fundamentals that snuck through the back door of the Nashville establishment and country radio. They played Fitzgerald's last year and are touring on their third RCA album, *Version of the Truth*.

■ Monday: 9 p.m. concert at Fitzgerald's, with Jo-Eli Sonnier and Zachary Richard.

"Cajun Night" pits two headstrong stylists in a resonant bill. Sonnier, a Louisiana native, grew up speaking and playing Cajun, but his restless muse attracted him to the contemporary music of his day. Breaking free of tradition, he settled in California, where his emotionally open approach absorbed blues and rock embellishments. He returned to Louisiana and cut two superb albums, *Come On Joe* and last year's *Have a Little Faith*, both of which carve a contemporary niche with old-fashioned values.

Richard, a well-traveled character familiar to Houston clubgoers, is a ladies' man who has been called the Mick Jagger of Cajun. Jagger should be so lucky. Unlike Sonnier, the Louisiana-born Richard didn't start in Cajun, having moved to New York and Montreal as a folk singer. During the mid-'30s he moved back to the South and developed an eclectic style of Louisiana accordion rock, captured in his new album, *Women in the Room*.

■ Tuesday: 8 p.m. concert at the Tower Theater, with Flaco Jimenez and Emilio Navaira.

"Border Music of South Texas" features Jimenez, who continues a proud name in *norteno* music, and Navaira, a San Antonio singer who records for PolyGram.

Jimenez, born in San Antonio in 1939 as Leonardo, is the son of legendary accordionist Santiago Jimenez, a pioneer of *conjunto* as developed in San Antonio in the 1930s as South Texas dance music. *Conjunto* replaced regional orchestras and string ensembles at street dances. Better known than younger brother Santiago Jr., Flaco (which means "skinny") toured and recorded with Ry Cooder in the early '70s and played on 1988's *The Streets of Bakerfield*, recorded by Dwight Yoakam and Buck Owens. He is a

member of Tex-Mex supergroup the Texas Tornados, with Lone Star legends Freddie Fender, Doug Sahm and Augie Meyers. Their first Warner Bros. album is scheduled for a July 28 release.

■ Wednesday: 8 p.m. concert at the Tower Theater, with Rodney Crowell and Darden Smith.

Houston native Crowell, husband of Rosanne Cash, is a renegade rocker who was finally no-billed by his current home of Nashville following the 1988 album smash, *Diamonds & Dirt*. The album yielded a record five No. 1 country singles and elevated Crowell into the Nashville hierarchy — although he's just a good ole boy who loves to rock, twang and boogie. Crowell's *Leavin' Louisiana (By the Broad Daylight)* and *Stars on the Water* are testaments to his rollicking yet sensitive songwriting style.

Smith, a Brenham native, has been a well-kept secret until lately; now he's recognized as a top folk-country artist on the Austin scene. His personal song-craft has reached three records, a 1988 independent release, a 1988 Epic debut and last year's excellent collaboration with British rocker Boo Hewerdine.

■ July 27: 5 p.m. guitar workshop, 7:30 p.m. concert at Rockefeller's, 3620 Washington (861-9365), with Chet Atkins, Larry Carlton, Albert Lee and Leo Kottke.

Guitarists take over the old bank building on Washington. Atkins, of course, is a session man's session man, a major influence on guitarists throughout the world with his finger-picking and single-note jazz styles that evolve to embrace new ideas. Atkins also managed RCA-Nashville for years before concentrating solely on performing and recording in 1982. Atkins' protegee Carlton has long been a West Coast session man and recorded 12 instrumental albums of his own during the '80s.

Briton Lee is considered a consummate sideman who has backed a Who's Who on concert tours, including stints with Emmylou Harris' Hot Band and Eric Clapton. His lightning runs on the Telecaster have earned him many awards among his contemporaries and industry publications.

Kottke, from Minnesota, emerged out of the John Fahey school of "contemporary classical American guitar," but has since built a reputation as a 12-string, open-tuning specialist and a storyteller of wry wit.

■ July 28: 9 p.m. concert at Willie Nelson's Night Life, 921 FM 1960 West (580-5638), with Waylon Jennings and Delbert McClinton.

Billed as "Country-Blues Night," this show unites two Texans enjoying career resurgences.

Jennings, another Lubbock kid, knocked around as a country picker and disc jockey before establishing himself in Phoenix, Ariz., in the '80s on the strength of a deep baritone, chicken-pickin' guitar licks and that straight-no-chaser 4/4 honky-tonk. He parlayed that into an outlaw image that defined country's rougher side in the '70s. Having cleared up from widely publicized bouts with cocaine, Jennings has returned from near-oblivion, with a fine new album, *The Eagle*, and a revitalized touring schedule.

Fort Worthian McClinton toiled for years as a roadhouse singer and harmonica player equally comfortable in country and blue-eyed soul. Neither particularly blossomed into a career of stardom despite a modest hit in 1980, *Giving It Up for Your Love*. But perseverance is paying off: Within the last year he has recorded for Alligator and Curb Records, and as any well-traveled roadhouse player will tell you, a good recording contract is hard to find and harder to hold onto.

For ticket information, call the individual concert sites.

Marlboro Music Festival events benefit Second Harvest, the United States' only national food bank. One dollar from every ticket sold for festival performances will be earmarked for this charity.

The amount raised will be split equally between Second Harvest and affiliate food banks in each festival city. In Houston, the Houston Food Bank will benefit from the proceeds, festival organizers say.

Tower Theatre site of Marlboro Music Songwriters Night

Marlboro Music's Songwriters Night will feature Guy Clark, Joe Ely, John Hiatt, and Mary Chapin Carpenter on Friday, July 20, at the Tower Theatre Workshop at 5 p.m., followed by a concert at 7:30 p.m.

Four of America's most respected songwriters - Clark, Ely, Hiatt and Carpenter - are joining forces for an intimate evening of songs and stories.

Clark, Ely and Hiatt performed together in last year's highly acclaimed Marlboro Music Festival in New York, and the easy-going spontaneity that happens among

them as they sing their old favorites, is a treat for anyone who admires a successful marriage of music and words.

For her part, Carpenter is one of the brightest new singing and songwriting stars on the horizon, and her gift for understated observation and storytelling makes her one to watch.

Contemporary folk singer-songwriter Clark is credited as a major influence on Rodney Crowell, Steve Earle and Lyle Lovett. Clark gained a reputation as a top notch craftsman during the

seventies with songs like "Desperados Waiting for a Train" and "L.A. Freeway."

Recently, he has penned No. 1 country hits with Rodney Crowell ("She's Crazy for Leaving") and for Ricky Skaggs ("Heartbreak").

The cover of Clark's latest Sugar Hill release "Old Friends" is a self-portrait, painted with the same simplicity and directness that marks his songwriting style. Nominated for a Grammy this past year, "Old Friends" offers well-told tales and eloquent imagery, buoyed as ever by Clark's

rough-hewn voice and acoustic guitar.

Ely hails from the same West Texas country that gave the world Buddy Holly and Waylon Jennings, and like them, he's made music that roams freely from rock and roll to country and back again, all the while remaining true to his deep Texas roots.

In the midseventies Ely settled in Austin, and his songs began to find their way onto albums. His own debut album was released in 1977.

His eighth album, "Dig All

Night," reveals a mature songwriter and singing stylist, still stubbornly refusing to be pigeonholed, still finding truths in both rock and country.

Nashville is proud to claim Hiatt as one of its own. Though he's been around a long time and has had his songs recorded by acts as diverse as Grammy-Award winner Bonnie Raitt, Three Dog Night, Conway Twitty, Bob Dylan, Rosanne Cash, and the Neville Brothers, Hiatt was a well-kept secret until the release of his 1987 A&M album, "Bring the Family," which garnered unanimous critical acclaim and set

the stage for the success of his new album "Shouten Moments." Born in Indiana, Hiatt began writing songs at age 11 and estimates his total output thus far at about 600 songs.

He recorded his first album in 1974. By 1979, he had moved to Los Angeles and signed with MCA. Since those days, he has recorded several other albums (he now has nine to his credit), performed with scores of artists and contributed to film and television soundtracks.

Carpenter is the newcomer in this bunch of songwriters, but with

her second Columbia album, "State of the Heart," she's already staked her claim as a singer-songwriter to be reckoned with.

The album has yielded three Top 20 country singles, rave reviews in the national press, and it landed her the Academy of Country Music's 1990 award for Top New Female Vocalist.

All of which has been quite a surprise for the Princeton, New Jersey, native who as recently as four years ago had never imagined that her music was country, let alone that it would be played regularly on country radio.

But a single listen to her husky drawl, and the carefully crafted songs she wraps it around, makes clear that Carpenter has a bright future in country music.



GUY CLARK



JOE ELY



JOHN HIATT



MARY C. CARPENTER

Music fest to spread talent all over town

preview by RICHARD TUTHILL

If up close and personal is how you prefer your music, the Marlboro Music Festival offers the chance to hear some of country and rockabilly music's true heavyweights in just that environment. Some of these performers are accustomed to playing far larger venues than they'll be playing for the festival, so expect plenty of those elusive "magic moments." As if that weren't enough, two nights are workshop affairs in which the artists will share some of the secrets of their craft.

Though each night of the MMF is a singularly fine bill, several stand out above the rest. Rockabilly Night at Fitzgerald's on Sunday is



Guy Clark

an excellent pairing of the old and the new in country rock: Carl Perkins and Foster and Lloyd. Before Elvis even considered glomming onto the scene, Perkins was there with the original version of "Blue Suede Shoes," only one of his sassy, influential songs. He also penned "Honey Don't," "Everybody's Trying to Be My Baby" and "Matchbox," all of which were recorded by an unknown Liverpool band called the Beatles.

Foster and Lloyd, touring behind their third RCA record, *Version of the Truth*, have taken country in a new direction, adding honky tonk and classic sixties tunesmanship to the contemporary Nashville country sound.

Texas Music Night at the Tower Theatre on Wednesday, July 25, features two musicians who've created their own sound out of myriad influences. Darden Smith, originally from Brenham, is perhaps best known for his 1989 Chrysalis release, *Evidence*, with Boo Hewerdine of the Brit rock group, The Bible. His songs reflect a confident, socially aware sensitivity in a range of settings far beyond his native state.

Like Smith, Houston native Rodney Crowell worked in relative anonymity for years before being recognized by the music establishment. His 1988 Columbia LP, *Diamonds and Dirt*, has



Mary Chapin Carpenter

been the icing on a career cake that saw him writing hits and producing records for a host of country musicians, including his wife, Rosanne Cash. Crowell's last Houston performance was at the Astrodome for the Livestock Show and Rodeo, so there's no need for binoculars this time around.

Houston's newest country venue, Willie Nelson's Nightlife, is the host for the MMF Blues Country Night on Saturday, July 29.

Opening the show will be long-time Houston favorite Delbert McClinton, who in his 30 years has backed up such blues luminaries as Howlin' Wolf, Lightnin' Hopkins and Big Joe Turner. His latest release, *I'm With You* on Curb Records has continued McClinton's reputation as the seminal no-crap roadhouse rocker.

Filling out the bill is another thirty year veteran who's played it all, Waylon Jennings. The winner of two Grammy and four Country Music Association Awards, Jennings first rose to widespread crossover popularity during the infamous cosmic cowboy reign of the mid-seventies along with Jerry Jeff Walker, David Allen Coe and Willie Nelson. Throughout his career Jennings has given little thought to musical boundaries, taking his music through the realms of blues, rock, straight country, rock and roll and R&B as the mood of the moment suited. His most recent record, *The Eagle*, for Epic Records, has continued the performer's trailblazing ways.

Some of the country's foremost songwriters will grace the stage at the Marlboro Music Festival's Songwriters Night at the Tower Theatre on Friday. Guy Clark, who wrote the classics "Desperadoes Waiting For a Train" and "L.A. Freeway," shares the bill with Lubbock native Joe Ely, hot on the heels of his eighth album, *Dig All Night*. Also on the slate for Songwriters Night is John Hiatt, who before his latest highly acclaimed records, *Bring the Family* and *Stolen Moments*, had his songs recorded by the Neville Brothers, Conway Twitty, Bob Dylan and Bonnie Raitt. Rounding out the show is relative newcomer Mary Chapin Carpenter, who's just released her second Columbia LP, *State of the Heart*.

Local guitar aficionados will be frothing at the mouth over the sole Rockefeller's entry to the festival, the guitar workshop/concert on Friday. Chet Atkins, recording artist, session



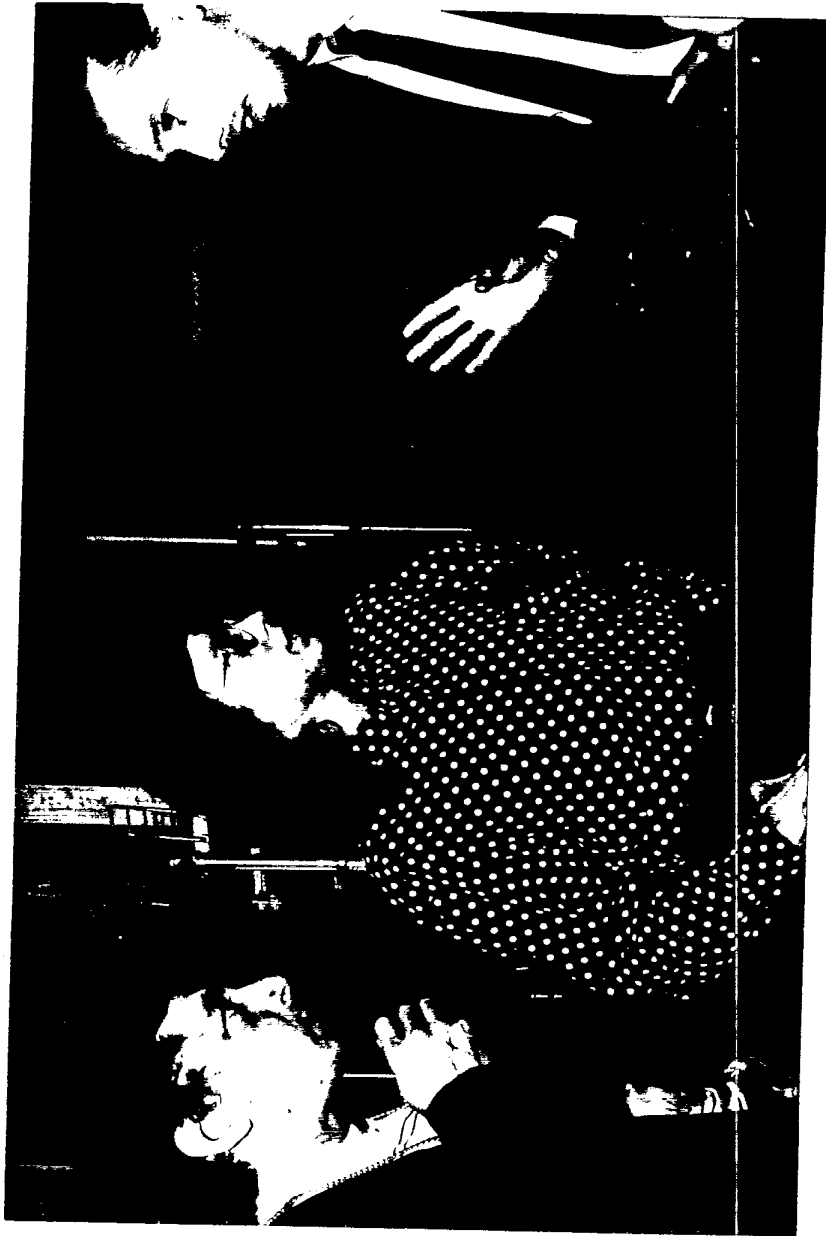
Chet Atkins

musician and producer, has influenced more guitarists than we have room to print. In addition to his solo records, Atkins has collaborated with such guitar heroes as George Benson, Earl Klugh, and Mark Knopfler of Dire Straits.

With his trademark Gibson ES-335 electric, Larry Carlton was the progenitor of the '70's West Coast guitar sound, including his stints backing up stars like Dolly Parton, John Lennon, Christopher Cross and Steely Dan. English guitarist Albert Lee, winner of numerous awards for country guitar, will round out this show with his quicker than the eye Telecaster work. Backing up this trio of master guitarists will be three of Nashville's best session workers — David Hungate on bass, Larrie London on drums, and Randy Goodrum on keyboards.

The other nights of the Marlboro Music Festival are not slouches by any means. The Tower Theatre will host Southern Rock Night (July 21) with Joe Ely and Webb Wilder, as well as Southern Border Night (July 24) with Flaco Jimenez (!) and Emilio Navaira. Fitzgerald's will also host Cajun Night (July 23) featuring Jo-el Sonnier and Zachary Richard. Check the PN Calendar in this issue for details. While you're deciding which of seven of these eight nights to attend keep in mind that a dollar of each ticket price goes to benefit the Houston Food Bank and the country's only national food bank, Second Harvest.

Joe Fly and Radney Foster at the
Houston Food Bank.



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Chet Atkins, Albert Lee,
Leo Kottke and Larry Carlton

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John Hiatt, Joe Ely, Mary Chapin
Carpenter and Guy Clark
"Songwriter's Night"



Foster & Lloyd with Carl Perkins
on stage - "Rockabilly Night"

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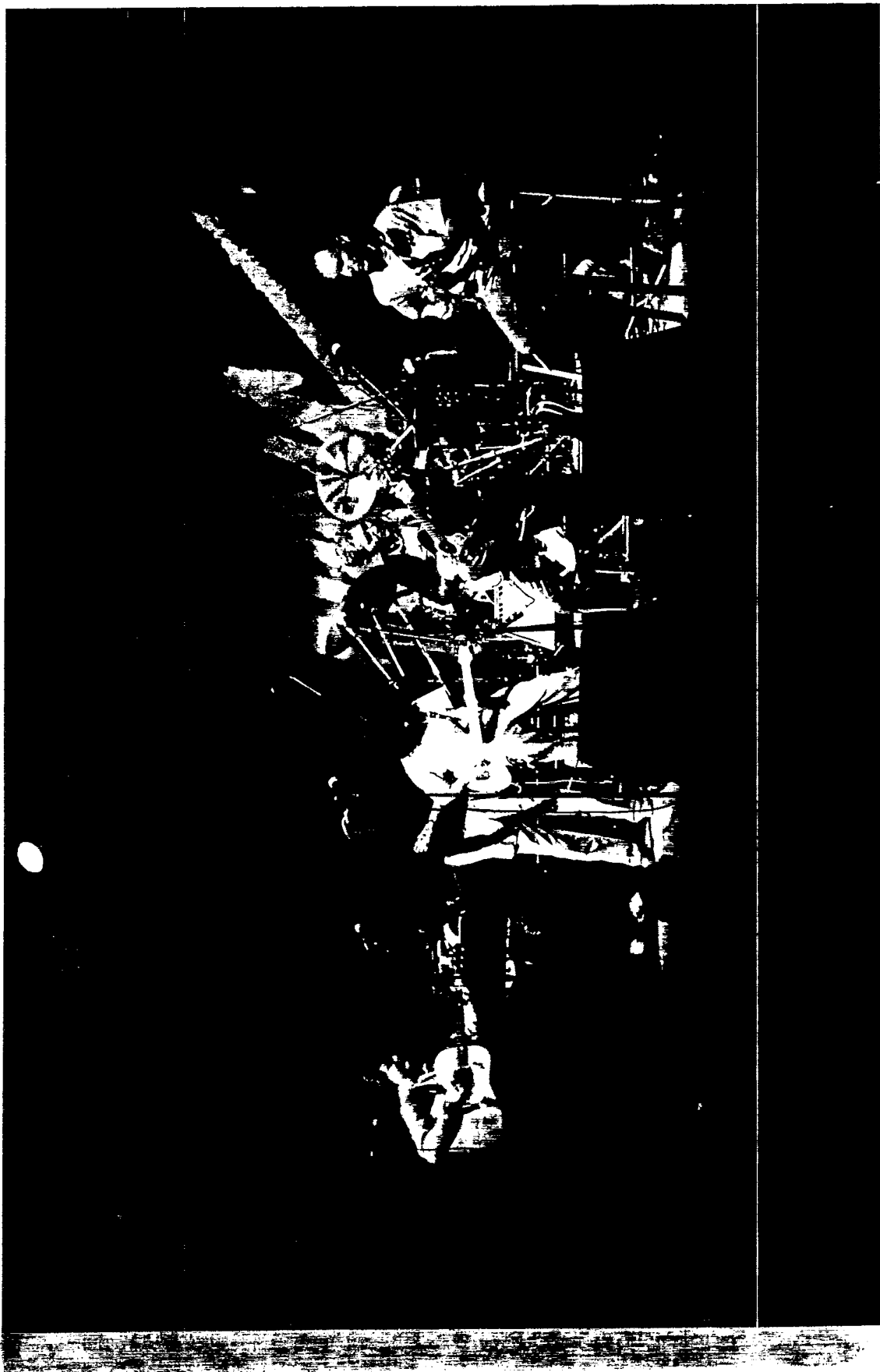


Flaco Jimenez and Emilio Navaira
"Southern Border Night"

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Lee Kottke, Albert Lee, Chet Atkins
and Larry Carlton - "Guitar Workshop"



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