

4-B THE MIAMI NEWS Thurs., Aug. 31, 1972



Comedians Cheech and Chong

Two comedians speak to young

By RON KERNSTEIN
And
HERB GREENBERG
Miami News Staff

Talking with Cheech and Chong is no different than talking with your next door neighbor. You have to keep reminding yourself that these two guys are the hottest comedy team around. Their casual personalities make you wonder if THEY realize who they are — "the voice of the dope generation."

Richard (Cheech) Martin, 26, and Tommy Chong, 24, in the three years they've been together as a team, have two gold records to their credit (their latest million-selling album, Big Bambu, is currently No. 3 on the national charts).

The crowd at the Miami Jai-Alai fronton jammed the sides Saturday to see and hear this comedy act that centers their material around drugs, sex and city life.

Cheech and Chong are a creation of themselves. There was no planning; they just happened. Their ideas come from real life. "If we see a cat on the street, we start imitating him," says Cheech.

The success of Cheech and Chong hasn't changed their lives. They know who they are and how people feel about them. They know if they stick with one bit, they'll soon die off.

"The trick is not to expand too fast. Go too fast and the next thing you know you

have nothing to fall back on," said Chong, the more talkative of the two.

"But right now, we're untapped. The comedy is what's needed. You can go to see a million musical groups, how many comedians can you go see?"

"We're just babies in this business," Cheech added. "We got a long way to go." Plans are in the making for a third album. But they will put out a movie first. They wrote it, they'll direct it, and they'll star in it. "It won't be a Woody Allen thing, it'll be a Cheech and Chong thing."

They haven't gone unnoticed by the television world. "But they (networks) don't want us to do anything about dope, sex, nothing against the Administration..."

"We turned them down. Las Vegas invited us too. But we refused them. It's not worth the headache. We can go to rock concerts where they dig us. We can make more money there. We got nothing to prove. People want to see us, they'll come and see us," Chong said.

Chong is the son of the owner of a topless night club. He got his start in a band in western Canada. When the group, Bobby Taylor and the Vancouveris, broke up, he directed the stage shows at his father's night club. Chong then formed an improvisational group, called City Lights.

Cheech, the son of a Los Angeles policeman, traveled to Canada and joined the group after six members of City Lights quit, that left Cheech and Chong, who decided to try it themselves. A decision that the "dope generation" is thankful for.

Townes Van Zandt due at The Flick

By DIANE GOLDBLUM
Miami News Staff

Townes Van Zandt is a modern folk singer in the classical tradition: quiet, understated and down-to-earth. To the above string of adjectives I might also add another, unknown. However, this week Miami will be in for a rare treat as Van Zandt arrives in for a stint at The Flick.

Judging from his recordings and club reviews, Van Zandt should by all rights become a major force in folk music. Although big-time success has thus far eluded him, Van Zandt is nevertheless building a large following of devoted fans who recognize his recordings as the work of an artist.

Appearing with him this week is another folk artist Chris Smither.

The Flick is open Wednesday through Sunday with two shows nightly, 8:30 and 10:30 and a late show every Friday and Saturday nights.

Other musical events this weekend... The Ambrosy Dukes, Ramatani, Dr. Hook.

First JFK show cancelled over union hassle

WASHINGTON Star — Deadlocked contract negotiations between the Musicians Union and the John F. Kennedy Center for the performing arts have forced cancellation here of the season's opening production in the opera house and are jeopardizing three other scheduled shows.

Director signed for racing biopic

HOLLYWOOD — Executive producer Joe Wizan has signed Lambert Johnson to direct "The Last American Hero," a 20th Century-Fox release scheduled to begin production Oct. 1 on location in Charlotte, N.C., for William Roberts' and John Cutler's "Raja" Productions' company.

The film is a biography of famed stock-car racer Junior Johnson, "The Last American Hero" will be filmed from a screenplay by Roberts based on two short stories by Thomas Wolfe — "Chasin' Papa at Riverhead" and "The Last American Hero."

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ROCK music

of their first tour. By the way, the group hails from Tampa.

It would be a temptation upon hearing that Groundhogs are from England to pass them off as another rock band in the vein of the ill-fated Mr. Stewart and Faces or a heavy rock group like Cream.

However, Groundhogs won't allow that and a listen to their latest album, "Who Will Save the World? The Mighty Groundhogs!" shows why.

In addition to a large dose of rock music, and avant garde rock in the tradition of Emerson, Lake and Palmer, the album also contains elements of pop and some deep philosophical lyrics.

Perhaps the best illustration of this is the cut "Amazing Grace," a traditional song performed on the very untraditional melotron.

The group has been in existence for several years now, but still remains unknown to the American public. If this album catches on and is a success — perhaps they will pave the way for a new type of British group.

The name Lani Hall is hardly a household word, but chances are that her voice is more familiar. For five years she was the lead vocalist for Sergio Mendez and Brazil '72.

Now Lani has left that super successful group and is out on her own. Her first solo album "Sun Down Lady" is a successful blending of those qualities that we've come to expect from her good material, except arrangements and a lovely voice.

On this album the emphasis is on pop music and a heavy dosage of Elton John-Bernie Taupin, Paul Simon, Cat Stevens, Don McLean, and even a song written by Lani herself. The songs are stripped of the rock sound and given a new, softer one that is very appealing. Miss Hall has a gentle, serene voice that makes any song a pleasure to listen to. Among the standards are "Tara Dancer," "Come Down in Time" and "Ocean Song."

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