

("85 percent capacity — more than we planned for"), Alice Cooper and several other American artists can be grateful to the Rainbow for giving them powerful UK debuts. Mountain, for one, first played the Rainbow as a fairly low-keyed act, but returned soon to play to enthusiastic, sell-out audiences. Half the concerts in all were standing room only.

For a once-nightly, three-day stay at the Rainbow, groups picked up around £5000 (\$12,000). A reasonable figure

weekly newspaper that was started a year ago by Oz founder Richard Neville. Hubert spent the afternoon in Morris' flat looking vaguely amused as the tale of disaster was unfolded.

That evening Hubert was due to go to a meeting of the board of Ink directors and investors. "It's ironic," said Hubert, "but the Rainbow was planning to hold a benefit concert for Ink. I'm afraid that Ink has gone the same way as the Rainbow and run out of money and time."

For his benefit, Cleveland co-stars with Aretha, introducing her songs and accompanying her on piano and singing with her on several of them.

The movie or TV show being produced here was a last-minute arrangement between Jerry Wexler of Atlantic and Ted Ashley, head of Warner Brothers Pictures. A film crew was assembled in two days, and Sidney Pollack was pulled out of a WB editing room to direct. Previously, he directed *They Shoot Horses, Don't They?*

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The new Temple Missionary Baptist Church is one of dozens along South Broadway. It is a simple building, a small marquee in front giving it a glowing air of bravado—at least compared to most of the other churches around.

Inside, the pews are lines of theater seats. The pulpit is a large rostrum, backed by more theater seats for the choir. In the apse is a painting of the baptism of Jesus. The marquee doesn't say so, but the show is lady soul, Aretha Franklin. Two nights only.

And yet, neither Thursday nor Friday night is sold out. Aretha had just filled the Grove in white Hollywood at \$17.50 a person, and yet, in Watts, there were about 80 tickets—each marked for a \$10 donation—left at the small desk near the door, the church's box office.

The sessions were not heavily advertised, and perhaps the price was still too high for too many. And yet, for the people who came . . .

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The Southern California Community Choir marched slowly into the church from the rear while an organ began the music. All 34 members were dressed in black with metallic silver vests. They did a song, and then the Rev. Cleveland strode to the rostrum and announced: "Miss Aretha Franklin."

She got a standing ovation before she reached the front of the church. Beautiful / religious in a flowing white gown and a simple jeweled necklace. Another standing ovation greeted the first notes of the first number: Marvin Gaye's "Holy, Holy," Aretha on piano and the choir flowing along. It's 1972, all right.

The audience, shook by Miss Franklin's presence, by her spirit, quickly became a congregation, joining her in the song, shouting punctuations, waving and jumping, on Broadway. She, they, re-



Aretha: She sang "You've Got A Friend" about her friend Jesus

Aretha Sings in a Church in Watts

BY BOB CHORUSH

LOS ANGELES — Aretha Franklin approached the pulpit and, with an introduction just one word longer than her name, began singing. It was gospel, with choir, and the voices immediately began to soar, tangling and joining, then echoing off the walls of the small church in the black part of town.

The scene could have been 1960. Maybe in the Reverend C. L. Franklin's Baptist Church in Detroit, where the Franklin family gathered so many Sundays, and Aretha sang with her sisters. But she is here in the New Temple Missionary Baptist Church on South Broadway, in Watts, with recording equipment and movie cameras between her and a paid audience. It is 1972, indeed, and Aretha is finally recording her first live album of religious songs.

With Aretha is her long-time friend and gospel singer Reverend James Cleveland and his Southern California Community Choir. Atlantic is recording; Warner Bros. is filming. This may yet be a full-length film, or at least a TV special.

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Aretha Franklin had been thinking about doing a gospel album, live, for some time, with her record company always urging her on. Finally, last month, it was time. She selected Rev. Cleveland, who once lived at the Franklins' home and who is credited as one of Aretha's greatest influences. He has never had commercial success; through the years, he has refused to record secular music. But he and his choir are well-known to gospel music fans. He does make records, and he has his own church on Washington Blvd. in Los Angeles. Aretha's performance in Watts is a benefit; with the money he will remodel his Cornerstone Institutional Baptist Church,

demanding. A ten-minute version of "You'll Never Walk Alone" was tagged with a five-minute "second take." This is, after all, a recording session . . .

With Rev. Cleveland introducing each number, Aretha did "Precious Memories," "Thank You, Lord," and Aretha's rendition of Carole King's "You've Got a Friend." When Donny Hathaway does it in a club, the congregation sings a love song. Here, the lyrics got religion woven in: "You've got a friend in Jesus . . . He'll be there/ He can brighten your darkest hours/ Just call out His name."

Two more standing ovations, and by now the spirit has been sweeping through the church for an hour. Cassette recordists and amateur photographers had left their machines and cameras at their feet, and they were in danger of being stomped.

On stage—on the pulpit—Rev. Cleveland began the piano accompaniment for her last song, "Amazing Grace." He didn't last; midway through, he broke into tears and had to leave, and the choir members, who'd planned to be seated during the hymn, became a standing backup audience, singing along with Aretha.

Friday night, she added several more songs: "What a Friend We Have in Jesus," "Oh, Mary, Don't You Weep," and "I'm So Glad" among them. And in the audience were her father, sister Carol, Clara Ward and several of the Ward Singers, and sight-seers Mick Jagger and Bill Wyman.

Before her last song, Rev. Franklin mounted the pulpit and spoke to the crowd. "This evening took me back to the living room at home when Aretha was six or seven," he said. "I saw some of you crying. Well, I was just about to burst wide open; you talk about being moved. Aretha is not just my daughter Aretha, but a *stone* singer.

"If you want to know the truth, Aretha has never left the church. If you have the ability to feel, and if you have the ability to hear, you know that Aretha still is a gospel singer."