

WoodSongs and the Kentucky Theatre

It was a quiet afternoon when I met up with my friend Jim Piston at Common Grounds Coffeehouse.

“How hard can it be to start a national level concert series in Lexington?” we wondered.

Pretty ding dang hard.

Thus the TROUBADOUR concert series was born at the Kentucky Theatre. The first concert was Lucinda Williams advertised for “10 lousy bucks.”

The community run, all-volunteer concert series with Corday Piston, Rick Rushing, Connie Harrison and so many others presented nearly 200 concerts at this beautiful downtown venue. Everyone from Merle Haggard, Bill Monroe, Joan Baez, the Avett Brothers, Leo Kottke, John Prine and many more performed on the stage.

After 57 weeks in a row at the Central Library theater, WoodSongs moved to the Kentucky and was there for almost 10 years. Artists from Bela Fleck and the Flecktones to Tommy Emmanuel, Brandi Carlisle Nora Jones, Nickle Creek to Richie Havens to appeared on the WoodSongs stage at the Kentucky.

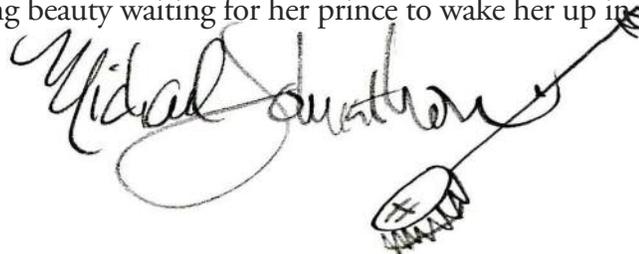
Boasting the best popcorn in Kentucky, I would venture to say it is the best popcorn in North America. Fred Mills is a master popcorn popper. The spirit of the theatre is a combination of Grapes of Wrath and Mayberry, a staple of downtown especially at night when the marquee lights send out the glowing message that Lexington is alive and well.

The arts have been brutalized through this pandemic and economic showdown. We are losing so many precious venues, music clubs, concert series and many artists are permanently retiring, changing careers and looking for other employment.

Thankfully, Highbridge Spring Water is keeping the TROUBADOUR concert series alive and well ... WoodSongs is alive and well, and we patiently and anxiously await the time when we can reassemble and get back to doing what we love.

But for now the Kentucky theater is closing, you should go see a movie and get some of Fred Mills' popcorn before it does.

I'm sure it will be back, she is a grand lady and a princess of movie theaters, one of a kind and Lexington is very fortunate to have her. Consider it a nap ... sleeping beauty waiting for her prince to wake her up in the spring.



Yidal Dunbar