

Singer Van Zandt, KiMo Comfortable Combination

By TOM MARSHALL

The KiMo Theater and Townes Van Zandt are a good match. The intimate surroundings of the recently remodeled theater provide a good atmosphere to hear his thoughtful, and often hilarious, songs of life.

Van Zandt, accompanied by Mickey White on second guitar, opened his set at the KiMo on Friday night with "If I Needed You," a lovely ballad which has been recorded by Emmylou Harris and Don Williams with some success. In Van Zandt's own words, "Here's a song that's been very good to me."

"Buckskin Stallion Blues" followed, a song he

said he wrote after he was thrown out of Crested Butte by the sheriff.

Throughout the evening, Van Zandt would carry on some light-hearted banter with the audience, or preface his songs with a brief discourse on their origin. Before starting "Snowin' on Raton," he chuckled and admitted it was nice to play the song without having to explain where Raton Pass is.

Van Zandt mixed folk and blues liberally. He performed three talking blues songs, all hilarious. "The Talking Fraternity Blues" explained why he didn't last long in one in college. "Talking Karate Blues" poked gentle fun at the martial arts, and "Talking Thunderbird Blues" discussed the pitfalls of cheap wine.

Mickey White, a former Albuquerquean, played some fine lead guitar, particularly when he used his slide. He also had a chance to perform a cou-

ple of numbers solo and showed that he is a proficient singer.

Opening the evening's concert was the Watermelon Mountain Jug Band, which demonstrated again that it's one of our most treasured natural resources. Their local wit, use of offbeat instruments and unusual song topics create a good time whenever they perform. I think it's time more people took notice. They are Jeff Burrows on guitar, Barbara Piper on washboard, Ben Perea on banjo (New Mexico champion three years in a row), Gary Oleson on gutbucket bass and Steve Wilkes on comb, kazoo and whatever else comes to mind.

It was a fun-filled musical evening and an enjoyable one for Townes Van Zandt and Mickey White. One of them remarked at set's end, "We'll be back as soon as we get up the gas money."

Tom Marshall is music director of KFMG radio.

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