

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 3, 1992

ST. LOUIS POST-DISPATCH

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NIGHT SOUNDS



Sandi Patti

Sandi Patti: It's Time For A Change

By Beth Harris
Associated Press Writer

ANDERSON, Ind.

SSANDI PATTI, Christian music's working mom, wants to take it easy this year. But her plans for a new album, book and TV special hardly resemble a vacation.

Patti craves time at home with her growing family, and her 12-month break a few years ago shows she can afford to stand out of the spotlight without being out of her fans' minds.

Winner of five Grammy and 29 Dove awards (for gospel music), she has sold more than 6 million albums since her big break 12 years ago when Bill Gaither invited her to join his gospel group.

She spent half of 1991 on the road. Except for the state fair circuit, she doesn't plan to tour this year.

Instead, she's working on a new album and a children's Christmas book. The book is being offered to the major networks as a made-for-TV movie, and Patti plans her own Christmas TV special.

The children's book is based on a song from Patti's Christmas album released several years ago.

"It's a song called 'Merry Christmas With Love,' and it's a story about a lady who's alone at Christmas. I just started asking a lot

of questions about why was she alone, why was Christmas a painful time for her and what might have happened," she said.

While Patti applauds the crossover of Amy Grant and Michael W. Smith into mainstream music, she doesn't envision that for herself.

"It would be a totally different direction for my music. I just feel real strong about the message that I'm singing...encouraging and challenging people to a deeper walk with the Lord," she said.

"For me to move over there would necessitate so many changes that I just really don't have any interest in."

"They're offering a wonderful alternative to the whole secular music scene. It's just really neat to see their acceptance," she said. Grant and Smith achieved their success with minimal references to Jesus and a softened spiritual tone in their music.

"I think whenever there's new ground charted everybody feels the impact," Patti said. "Some great doors have been opened to them that have not been opened to people who got their start in Christian music."

The Oklahoma native came to Anderson to attend college and ended up meeting her husband, John Helvering.

Their 12-year marriage has produced four children, including a twin son and daughter,

and a business partnership that handles a recording, music publishing, concert booking and merchandising operation from her newly rebuilt offices.

Patti spoke in spacious offices decorated in her signature color of lavender. The tranquil setting beside a frozen lake helps Patti forget the April 1990 fire that destroyed her offices and melted her Grammy and Dove awards.

Her inspiration and in-house critics are her children, who range in age from 7 to 2. She formed a club for kids, The Friendship Company, which publishes a magazine for its 25,000 members.

"I guess I'm just going through a re-evaluation of my life, weeding out the things that have been time-consuming but not important, and replacing all that with things that do have eternal value," she said.

"I'm still in that process of trying to figure all that out and to realize that the more happy, content and peaceful that I am is going to make me a better mom and a better artist and affect all those relationships."

The "Young Messiah Tour" featuring Patti and Steven Curtis Chapman will be at 7:30 p.m. Dec. 4 at The Arena, 5700 Oakland Ave. Tickets are \$14.50-\$16.50. (291-7600).

POP/ROCK/RAP

FRIDAY DECEMBER 4

Phish: 9 p.m., Miss. Nights, 914 N. 1st St., Laclede's Landing. **SOLD OUT.** (421-3853).
Trout Fishing In America: 9 p.m., Off Broadway, 3509 Lemp Ave. Rock. \$8. (773-3363).
Sandi Patti: (See story).
The Beat-O-Sonics: 9 p.m., Broadway Oyster Bar, 736 S. Broadway. Rock. (621-8811).
Faith Healers: 9 p.m., Kennedy's, 612 N. 2nd St. Rock. Lexx Luthor and Suave Octopus open. (421-3655).

SATURDAY DECEMBER 5

The Soup Dragons: Doors open 8 p.m., show 9 p.m., Miss. Nights, 914 N. 1st St., Laclede's Landing. Rock. Thousand Yard Stare opens. \$15-\$17. All ages admitted. (421-3853).
Willie Wisely Trio: Doors open 8 p.m., show 9:30 p.m., Cicero's, 6510 Delmar Blvd. Rock. \$3. (862-0009).

MONDAY DECEMBER 7

Alice In Chains: 8 p.m., Miss. Nights, 914 N. 1st St., Laclede's Landing. **SOLD OUT.** (421-3853).
Goobar & the Peas: Doors open 8 p.m., show 9:30 p.m., Cicero's, 6510 Delmar Blvd. Rock. \$3. (862-0009).
Bad Company: 7:30 p.m., The Fox, 527 N. Grand Blvd. Rock. Sass Jordan opens. Free. (534-1111).

WEDNESDAY DECEMBER 9

Townes Van Zandt: Doors open 8 p.m., show 9:30 p.m., Cicero's, 6510 Delmar Blvd. Rock. \$7. (862-0009).

THURSDAY DECEMBER 10

New Potato Caboose: Doors open 7:30 p.m., show 9:30 p.m., Miss. Nights, 914 N. 1st St., Laclede's Landing. Rock. \$5. All ages admitted. (421-3853).

FOLK

FRIDAY DECEMBER 4

Defend Me Heaven: 9 p.m., Wabash Triangle Cafe, 6155 Delmar Blvd., Chicago group plays folk-rock. \$3. (721-4112).

SATURDAY DECEMBER 5

Ann & Charlie Heyman: 8 p.m., Sheffield's, 8158 Big Bend Blvd., Webster Groves. Duo plays folk dance tunes on varied instruments, including the Irish harp. \$8. (726-4707).

JAZZ

FRIDAY DECEMBER 4

Steve Ungar Quartet: 9 and 10:30 p.m., Dec. 4-5, Just Jazz, Hotel Majestic, 1019 Pine St. Two-drink minimum. (436-2355).

SATURDAY DECEMBER 5

Paragon Ragtime Orchestra: 8 p.m., CASA, 560 Trinity Ave. \$8-\$25. (863-7888).

MONDAY DECEMBER 7

Mike Vax: 7 p.m., Lindbergh H.S. aud., 4900 S. Lindbergh Blvd. Vax plays trumpet with the Ambassadors of Swing. Free. (966-3817).

TUESDAY DECEMBER 8

Oliver Lake Quintet: 8 p.m., Steinberg Aud., Washington U., northwest corner of Skinker and Forsyth blvds. Sax player is backed by Reggie Thomas, Steve Kirby, Gary Sykes and Russell Gunn. \$2-\$8.

WEDNESDAY DECEMBER 9

Von Freeman: 9 and 10:30 p.m. Dec. 9-12, Just Jazz, Hotel Majestic, 1019 Pine St. Tenor sax player performs with Reggie.

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POP LIFE

Uncle Tupelo: Band Plays Great Music In Any Language

By Paul Hempel

Great Danes: An excerpt from a review of a recent Uncle Tupelo concert in a Danish magazine reads:

"The Headbangerne stoppedpe pludselig LSD-dansen, men det varde ikke laenge. Sa var ogsa de indfanget af magien, og pludselig forstod alle, hvorfor dette orkester var hentet over dammen og praesenteret som et kommende verdensnavn.

For det er Uncle Tupelo. Intet mindre. De er i virkeligheden chokerende faerdige og modne, nar de tor vaere det. Men de skulle altsa ogsa lige slutte af med to numre mainstream rock, der ikke matchede forbilledet Neil Young, nar han er vred."

Jorgen Grunnet, the Minister-Counselor at the Danish Embassy in Washington, translated it for us:

"The headbangers suddenly stopped the LSD dance, but not for long. Then, they too were caught by the magic and suddenly everyone understood why this band had been brought across the pond to be presented as a coming world name.

"Because this is Uncle Tupelo. No less. They are really chockingly accomplished and mature when they dare be so. But they also just had to finish off with two numbers



The members of Uncle Tupelo (from left): Jeff Tweedy, Bill Belzer and Jay Farrar.

of mainstream rock which did not match their idol Neil Young when he is angry."

Manager **Tony Margherita** said that the members of the Belleville band — **Jay Farrar, Bill Belzer and Jeff Tweedy** — are having a blast on their European tour, which began two weeks ago.

"They're really having fun," he said. "I think this tour is similar to their first tours out of the St. Louis region, when they traveled around America. There were people at their shows who knew the music and people who just came to check

it out. They're drawing 100 to 200 people in most places."

In Malmo, Sweden, the band ran into some compatriots from Springfield, Mo.

"They had the night off in Malmo and went to the **Skeletons** concert," Margherita said. "It was weird."

Uncle Tupelo is now touring Germany and Holland as the opening act for **Bob Mould's** group **Sugar**. The band returns home in mid-December for a performance at 9 p.m. Dec. 18 at Mississippi Nights, 914 N. 1st Street on Laclede's Landing. Cover is \$6. All ages.