

B-10—Santa Cruz Sentinel — Sunday, July 14, 1985



Super soloist

Super soloist and master songwriters Peter Rowan and Townes Van Zandt (pictured) perform in two sets each Tuesday evening at O.T. Price's Music Hall in Soquel. Rowan penned "Panama Red" and "Free Mexican Airforce." Among Van Zandt's credits are "Pacho and Lefty," "If I Needed You" and "Delta Mama Blues." For more information, call 476-3388.

Music publisher seeks songs

Dan Howell, publisher for Criterion Music, visits the San Francisco Bay Area July 15 and 16 to screen songs as this month's guest publisher for the Northern California Songwriters Association. Criterion has placed five number one country hits in the last three years. In the pop music market, the company published "Almost Over You" sung by Shena Easton and the Bob Seger hit "Shame on the Moon." Howell, who was Ambrosia's pub-

lisher, is listening for great lyrics and writers with a distinctive style in the country, rock, pop and new music categories. The visit includes a question and answer period and discussion of the songwriting business. The Monday session is at Rooster T. Feather's in Sunnyvale, and Tuesday's is at The Front Page in San Francisco. For more information, call 476-3740.

Rob Lowe dares to be different

By GEORGE WILLIAMS
HOLLYWOOD — Rob Lowe is a throwback to the days of the big movie stars. He has Tyson Power-type good looks. He's bright, articulate, self-confident, and ambitious. What he lacks in a big voice like the Powers, Errol Flynn and Robert Taylor, makes up for in his acting ability.

And he's in demand. Currently starring in "St. Elmo's Fire," he'll soon appear as a young American hockey player breaking into professional sports in "Youngblood." His first four movies, Francis Coppola's "The Outsiders," "Crazy" with Jacqueline Bisset, "Hotel New Hampshire," and "Ordinary People," were money makers and are high on the video-rental charts. Like Power and Flynn, he's at his best in a role where he's allowed to drop the mask of handsomeness and devil-may-care and show his glimpses of vulnerability and helplessness. Two such roles are in "Hotel New Hampshire," directed by Tony Richardson, and "St. Elmo's Fire." They're also his parents' two favorites as well as his own. Lowe said during an interview here after a screening of "St. Elmo's Fire."

"What better movie could you ask for than 'Hotel New Hampshire'?" he asked, tongue-in-cheek. "It has sex, rape, incest, bestiality. Actually, it was a lot of fun — and those are the best movies. When it's fun on the set, you can see it in the finished product."

In "St. Elmo's Fire," Lowe plays Billy Hixx, a recent college graduate who drops his fears about the future with drugs and alcohol as he realizes the highlight of his life was school, that he has peaked at 22, that it's never going to get any better.

"Billy Hixx is one of those people who hasn't found out where he fits in yet," Lowe says. "At one time, he fit in with his friends. But now they're changing, he's changing — and it's becoming clear to him that he's after something different in life. He is just coming to terms with himself, realizing that the Georgetown University scene is not for him. There's always a subplot to what Billy is saying. He is full of contradictory emotions. That's the thing about Billy that attracted me. There are so many elements to him — more than you usually get to play in two films."

Actually, Billy is something of a

rat. He's a gifted saxophonist, but can't hold a job. He has a wife and baby, but constantly deserts them, leaving them to live in poverty. He's forever betraying his close friends.

"This role is a very different one for me," Lowe says. "There's always a danger of being typecast doing whatever comes the most easily to you. I've always tried to be as different as a script would allow me to be. But you can't get offbeat roles if the casting people see you only as this one kind of person. Maybe in this role I'll show something different than they expected."

"And I've learned something from

playing Billy. Since I was 9 years old, I always knew that I wanted to be an actor. I really couldn't comprehend what it was like for people who didn't know what they wanted to do with their lives.

"But having played Billy, I've become much more sympathetic. I'd like people to see in Billy Hixx that it's OK not to know yet exactly what you are going to do for the rest of your life."

In addition to starring in movies, Lowe has begun to branch out. He has formed a company with offices at Columbia to produce his own films.

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