

## Taj Mahal

Legendary blues guitarist comes to USC's Koger Center

By OCTAVIA WRIGHT  
Staff Writer

The bluesy Taj Mahal, who has been supported by musical greats Mick Jagger and Eric Clapton, will bring his unique sound to the Koger Center tonight.

As a youngster, Taj Mahal became interested in the competitive field of music. His mother tried to get him interested in classical music, but Mahal knew that his musical destiny subsided in the world of blues.

"(My mother) was a pretty sophisticated lady, and she wasn't too interested in me howlin' the blues. So I had to go underground," he said.

After completing college, Taj

moved to Los Angeles and began to make a name for himself at the clubs in town. However, his first experiences in Los Angeles weren't exactly pleasant ones.

"I was the doorman, the chief cook and bottle-washer, announcer, light man, and then sometimes I got to open shows when the first act didn't show up."

Even though he had to wait for his chance to come, he learned numerous things from the people who came before him. He worked with Lightnin' Hopkins, Yank Rachel, Jessie Fuller and others. Working with these people turned out to be the eventual precursor to his 'popularity boom' in the '70s.

It was during this time that his tour schedule began to fill, not to mention his recording contracts with Columbia, Warner Brothers and Crystal Clear Records. He also recorded the soundtrack for the movie *Sounder*.

Mahal's unique style was the

trait that propelled him into the forefront. He plays several instruments but mainly performs with his guitars.

Even though his originality has given him popularity and endless tour dates, he credits others for his career success. "In the late '60s, I got a great deal of help from Mick Jagger and the Rolling Stones, who liked my style a lot. They came to LA once for a concert... and Mick Jagger, Eric Clapton and Keith Richards were out there dancing."

Later on, Jagger and his crew helped Mahal get 'established' in Europe by helping him with his tour and setting him up in France.

Currently, Mahal is on an American tour. Before his appearance at the Koger Center at 8 p.m. tonight, he has performed in Virginia and other areas. Tickets are \$8 for the general public and \$4 for USC students with an ID. The show is being sponsored by CPU.

## Students, faculty to auction art

From Staff Reports

The 35th annual Student-Faculty Art Auction at USC will be held at 8 p.m. tonight in the Campus Room of Capstone House.

Viewing of the 90 selected works of art began last night in the Campus Room and was followed by a preview party featuring harpsichord and flute selections.

The auction offers community residents the opportunity to buy quality artwork by USC art department students and faculty at reasonable prices. Traditionally, buyers have been able to purchase art for prices ranging from \$20 to \$1,000, said USC art Professor Boyd Saunders, coordinator of the event.

Though many people have the impression that art auctions are high-brow affairs, the USC auction is conducted in a fun atmosphere, he said.

Saunders will serve as auctioneer with John O'Neil, art department chairman. Guest auctioneers will be Sal Cilella, director of the Columbia Museum of Art, and Betsy Havens, a Columbia art gallery owner.

Proceeds from the sale go to the contributing artists and to benefit projects within the art department. The auction is free and open to the public.



Blues singer Taj Mahal

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