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Lilith lives up to dreams

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Chicago — We finally made it to Lilith Fair at the New World Theatre after dodging rush hour traffic on the Chicago expressway and maneuvering through parking lot that resembled an obstacle course.

Inside the midway, the pungent aroma of clove cigarettes and patchouli cologne permeated the air and many sight bombarded us. Shops with names like Fairie Moon and Dancing Goddess displayed a multitude of trinkets and beads, which dangled in the afternoon sun. Meanwhile, lines already were forming at the portable potties.

Thousands of different people gathered for one purpose: good music.

Ever since the creation of Lilith Fair last summer, plus the release of the Lilith Fair CD this summer, I have dreamed of attending what the CD calls a Celebration of Women.

The August 5th performance lived up to my dreams. New to the Lilith stage was Chicagoan Liz Phair. The stylish yet rebellious Phair belted out Johnny Feelgood and kept the momentum going with Supernova which not only motivated the audience to dance but brought Natalie Merchant dancing to the stage.

Merchant even aided Phair in singing the most explicit lyric from the song. Phair's lyrics were greeted with cheers,

laughter and even a couple of Oh my goshes. If you can handle Phair's blunt style, I suggest purchasing her new CD. It will be released this fall. It features songs performed at Lilith Fair.

Bonnie Raitt followed in Phair's footsteps and kept the audience tapping its feet to the beat of her slide guitar. When Raitt brought her hit Something to Talk About to the stage, it got the audience up and dancing.

Raitt philosophized about the hardships of life and love and brought the crowd to tears with her heart wrenching ballad I Can't Make You Love Me. Tears overflowed the stage into Natalie Merchant's act.

The song Ghetto, which Merchant dedicated to Chicago, brought tears not only to the audience's eyes but to those of Merchant, who could barely sing the last couple of verses of the song. Merchant also sang Ophelia while melodramatically taking out her braids and shaking out her long dark hair.

Although Merchant's performance lacked songs from her stint with the band 10,000 Maniacs, it still had the feeling unique to Merchant's performances.

Headliner for the Lilith Fair finale was its creator, Sarah McLachlan. Her mesmerizing voice reverberated throughout the stadium as cheers and a couple of marriage proposals came from the audience.

She sang Building a Mystery with soul, making me ignore the fact local radio stations have played the song to death. McLachlan's most spellbinding

moment was during the song Angel. It was just her beautiful voice and a piano.

Although one could say many of the songs performed by the artists were typical hits from the radio, it didn't matter. The voices of these women resounded with soul, inspiration and spunk you can get only from a live performance.

If you have the chance to attend Lilith Fair, go. You will never forget it.