

# Common Ground

*Jefferson sings blues*

## Emmy winning vocalist performs for University

By CATHY CIARLETTA  
Aquinas Correspondent

On Friday the Houlihan-McLean Center set the stage for a romantic evening for couples, an educational experience for children and a pleasurable night for blues enthusiasts. The Emmy award-winning blues vocalist, Mary Jefferson, met multitudes of applause from the audience as she took the stage for her 8 p.m. performance, which included works by prominent blues artists, including Ethel Waters, Billy Holiday and Duke Ellington.

Jefferson, accompanied by Atris Fleming on piano, began her hour-long show by addressing the audience as to the purpose of her first appearance in Scranton.

"I want to give enlightenment, entertainment and education," Jefferson said.

Her first piece, which consisted of many negro spirituals, provided

the audience with an insight into African-American history and the struggles of slaves. Her great energy and dynamic voice lasted the entire performance and provoked an enthusiastic response from the viewers.

Jefferson's captivating personality enthralled the audience and her music filled the air. A number of people nodded their heads and tapped their feet in time to the rhythm.

The remainder of the show consisted of songs such as "Sweet Mama Stringbean," "C.C. Rider" and a solo performed by Fleming. The final piece, "Bye Bye Baby," evoked two standing ovations and prompted Jefferson's encore, which consisted of various Billy Holiday works.

Jefferson's superb stage performance and uniqueness is a result of natural talent and years of experience as a blues vocalist. A native of

Washington D.C., Jefferson grew up around such entertainers as Ella Fitzgerald and Alberta Hunter, as well as other performers who appeared at the famous Howard Theater where both her father and her grandfather worked.

In 1988 Jefferson won an Emmy Award for her documentary, "Seventh and T." The District of Columbia Commission of the Arts and Humanities appointed her the "Ambassador of the Blues" in 1989 and 1990.

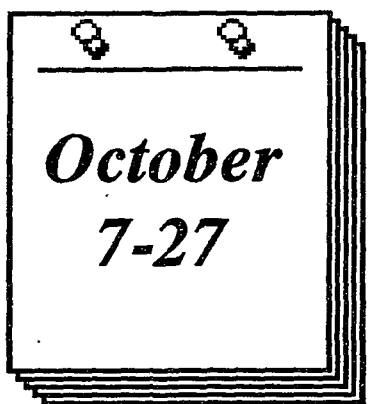
A number of film and television appearances, and a role as Bessie Smith in the "H.U. on Broadway" stage series presented by Howard University have extended her musical experience.

The Performing Arts Series referred to Mary Jefferson as a "blues artist who sings from the heart," and this reference is apparent to anyone who attended her concert.



Aquinas Photo/TED WATERMAN

Emmy award-winning vocalist Mary Jefferson sings the blues at 8 p.m. Friday in the Houlihan-McLean Center. Jefferson's performance was the fourth in the 1993-94 University Performing Arts Series.



**October  
7-27**

**Thursday, October 7**  
"Undercover Blues," showing at the Ritz Theater, 222 Wyoming Ave., 7 p.m. 99 cents admission.

"Real McCoy," showing at the Ritz Theater, 222 Wyoming Ave., 9:15 p.m. 99 cents admission.

Rosetta Stone, alternative band, Prufrock's Bookstore and Cafe, 342 Adams Ave., 9 p.m., \$2 admission

## ¿Qué Pasa?

Ladies' Night Jazz Jam featuring Nelson Hill, Lackawanna Station Hotel, 9:30 p.m.

Flying Mice, alternative band at Blues Street, 131 N. Washington Ave., 10 p.m., \$3 cover charge.

**Friday, October 8**  
Daddy O and the Sax Maniacs, high energy blues and R&B, Lackawanna Station Hotel, 9:30 p.m.

Young Gun and Stone Free, a tribute to Stevie Ray Vaughn and Jimi Hendrix, Blues Street, 131 N. Washington Ave., 10 p.m., \$4 cover

charge.

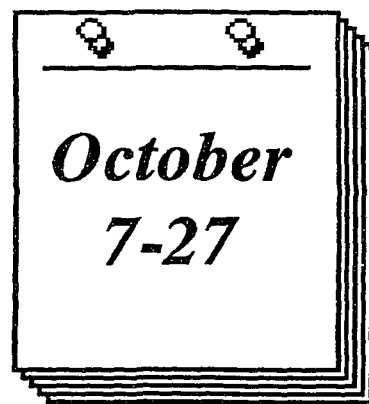
**Saturday, October 9**  
Active Ingredient featuring Spencer Reed, Lackawanna Station Hotel, 9:30 p.m.

**Wednesday, October 20**  
Performing Arts Series Noon Hour Concert featuring David Cullen, Houlihan-McLean Center, noon.

**Friday, October 22**  
Sophomore Fun Time, details to be announced.

Senior Fall Fest Night, details to be announced.

Sophomore Class Black Light dance in the Archives at 10 p.m.



**October  
7-27**

**Saturday, October 23**  
Comedy Night with Jim David in the Archives at 9 p.m.

**Sunday, October 24**  
"Last Action Hero," Student Government movie night in the Archives at 8 p.m. Free soda and popcorn.

**Tuesday, October 26**  
Crossroads open microphone, Archives at 8 p.m.