



### **Tripping the Light Fantastic**

**THE SHOW:** “The Platt Brothers,” wacky performance artists at the Sunset Temple.

**By Pat Launer, SDNN**

The Three Stooges meet the Flying Wallendas. The Platt Brothers will flip over backwards and stand on their heads to entertain you. The trio of Northern California natives, now San Diego residents, grew up in a family of seven offspring and no television. So they learned early to amuse themselves, and each other. In some ways, their engaging, high-energy show still seems to be doing just that. And you're invited along for the madcap ride.

The Brothers have been performing since they were tykes, and have received training in dance, acrobatics, acting, mime, storytelling, singing, music, stunts, gymnastics, stage combat, comedy and improv. All of the above are on display in the opening and closing segments of their newest full-length show. The bookends are “Opening” and the punnily titled “Platt Opus” (“Say it five times fast,” they suggest. “Now do you get it?”). Sandwiched in between is a family-friendly array of songs, skits and stories, mostly about your antic, puppydog-enthusiastic host/performers. There's the winning “Raccoon Story” about hunting the “raccoonicus gargangicanormicus” in the woods behind the house, in the dead of night, by which experience they learned what “nocturnal animal” meant. And there's “The Fire Story,” about treasure hunt plans gone awry. The funniest bit is “North Park's Braveheart,” about a local hero hellbent on defending the neighborhood against “demolishing nightclubs to make way for some fairly-priced parking.” Scantly attired in “Braveheart” kilts and Scots accents, they brandish their weapons and yell, “You will never take our artistic integrity!” This is one of the pieces that could have used more contentive development; it had promise for even greater humor and political/topical references. Many of the pieces go on a bit too long, and can be a little repetitive. It's not clear why the Brothers feel the need to tell each story, and then present it in song. Trust the audience; we can follow the tale musically without the full-on intro.

Each brother gets to do a number about his name: “Cheetah's Song,” “Cy's Song,” “Boone's Song” (Cheetah apparently made some of the costumes, too, though the major getup is matching jogging suits); not all are equally compelling. But these guys are so irresistible in their exuberance, vivacity, talent and goodwill. Their show isn't trying to make any points. It's self-referential, like so much of performance art, but unlike the more raunchy or sex-obsessed navel-gazing of that particular form, this is pure fun family entertainment. A few songs, a few good stories (and a few nips and tucks by a judicious editor/director wouldn't hurt); just grab the kids and go.

**THE BOTTOM LINE: BEST BET**