

Music

SUZI RAGSDALE & JOY LYNN WHITE, TRON THEATRE, GLASGOW

ROB ADAMS

THE Tron's intimate series of American troubadour concerts might almost be marketed as The Chip Off the Old Block Sessions. Hot on the heels of Kevin Montgomery, son of songwriter, producer, and Buddy Holly buddy, Bob, Suzi Ragsdale opened by declaring that she was born with her father's eyes. And the rest.

She's the living likeness of her dad, Ray Stevens, best known for novelty hits including *Bridget the Midget* and *The Streak* but a mighty Nashville session pianist, and still working. Taking turns of singing lead and harmonising with her pal, small-town girl from the north country, Joy Lynn White, and with quiet guitar back-up from Klaus Regli, she put on a concert of contrasts and compatibility.

There's a contentedness and stability in her background which comes through in her music. Einsteinean theories, clever wordplay, and classy keyboard chords in her own songs mix easily with high-quality covers of Guy Clark, Buddy Mondlock, and Darrell Scott items, delivered in a bluesy-soulful voice reminiscent of Bonnie Raitt and, on her dad's *Everything is Beautiful*, taken back to its gospel roots, more Ray Charles than Ray Stevens.

If White, on the other hand, ever stumbled into a bed of roses, it would be made of thorns rather than petals. Her performance couldn't have been more compelling and eloquent of the hurt and done down if she'd unzipped her chest and shoved her heart across the bar.

Her songs are industrial strength confessions, admittedly lightened by her dittsy, not to say spliffy, observations, but only heightened by her untutored approach to guitar accompaniments and the stark, bitter honesty of her singing.