Neil Young — 

harvest of gold

by Neal Vitale

The explosion of flashbulbs that greets 
Neil Young as he wades into the 
darkness of Boston Garden and on stage 
crest, he is surrounded by a sort of 
shining contrast so visually akin to the 
effect of lightning on the landscape on a 
sunny day. This shining contrast would 
prove to be but the first in a weekend 
trip of contrasts that would conjure up sharp 
juxtapositions of all sorts — it was not the 
same Neil Young playing before three 
sellout February crowds in Boston who 
played a pair of sets more than two years 
earlier at the Hante Hall; and, just as 
moods and personalities become clearly 
set against each other, Young's music 
showed the drastic changes of the passing 
time.

The Neil Young of January 26, 1971 
was a surly, high-strung, defensive 
musician playing by focusing back 
alignments (which confined him to a 
sideline, acoustic set) and coming off the 
disillusionment of the Crosby, Stills, Nash, 
and Young conglomerate. The Neil 
Young of February 9-10, 1973 was one 
loOSE, confident, secure artist, father 
of a child with Carrie Snodgrass, 
achieved success (through "Heart of Gold") and 
showed himself every bit as happy with his current 
hand of Stray Gators (Mssrs. Nitzsche, Keith, Buttrey, 
and Drummond). And while changing the 
person of Neil Young, that 
transformation altered his music as well; 
the guitar/piano set of 1971 
became, rather than the substance of each 
evening, just a short prelude.

February 1973 found Neil Young 
having moved through the transitional 
phase into which he was only entering in 
early 1971, and coming back full circle to 
the Crazy Horse/Everybody Knows This 
Is Nowhere trend of 1971, by 
and large, forsaken in the 
intermediate styles of After the Goldrush and 
Harvest. The electric material was 
ever more dramatic within the context of 
each night's concert, as the evening would 
open with a few solo numbers, then move 
to a near-acoustic set before going all-electric. The 
unaccompanied tunes were strongly reminiscent of the night 
two years prior, while the middle 
part of songs, done in their charging, 
longshanked, countrylike manner, seemed more foreign to 
Young, and ill-suited for him.

Ultimately, the electric rock numbers 
faulted best, particularly the new songs, 
though sometimes at the expense of the 
edge. The band, the musicianship, and 
the interest were, expectedly, geared to 
the more recent tunes and the strain 
showed elsewhere. The 
big visual plus 
was the "Old Man" song a nodal 
setting of Neil Young's life, in terms of 
success (through "Heart of Gold") and 
ill-suited for him.

The instrument breaks in both the acoustic 
and electric sets, and gave us an idea of 
what he had in store. And just what Neil 
Young has in mind, in the form of some 
new songs, sounds good to me.

The Knack at MIT

by P.L. Schindler

"The Knack" is being produced this 
weekend by the MIT Community 
Players. It is terrific. See it.

This is the kind of statement you 
usually associate with the end of a review. 
It is presented at the start of this review 
and is, in a probably futile effort to get more of 
you to see it if once we all know that you 
will be unable to prestage this dense 
play so the way down the column 
then the review will be the best $5 
investment you have made of late.

Let me state at the outset that I have 
not seen "The Knack and How to Get It"; 
the movie version of this classic 
comedy by Ana Jellicoe. That is the first 
question you will be asked if you say you are 
going.

Since it opened last night, the second 
question will be, "What wasn't like?" Even 
if you didn't see it, you can assure your 
tickets that it was brisk and funny, and 
that the Community Players deserve full 
houses for this one.

There is no aspect of this production 
that seems faulty to this observer's eye. 
Beginning with the usually ignored tech-

cine people, one finds appropriate well-
timed sound effects, sufficient lighting 
and realistic sets and costumes. 

The humor in this performance derives 
from all three sources: the first, 
for which credit must go to the author; the 
performances, for which credit goes to the 
well-cast cast and the stage "business" 
and overall interpretation, for 
which credit must go to director Karen 
Matson. 

Humor is a subtle and delicate busi-
ness, especially visual humor. There is 
a great temptation exhibited by everyone 
who performs comedy in public to over-
play the gag lines, to rely on slapstick and 
true "business" to put the humor across. 
Matson has fallen prey to none of this 
instead she provides amusing yet appro-
riate charatures of all the characters in 
the play. They are funny, but believably 
so. I found myself laughing much more 
often at what I saw than what I heard.

This is not to disparage the play itself. 
The author, a woman, has obviously 
had an experience along the lines of 
the playground. She writes very sensitively about 
the problems of the make-out artist's 
victim, and proves time and again that she 

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