

University sounds the right notes

By **EUGENE
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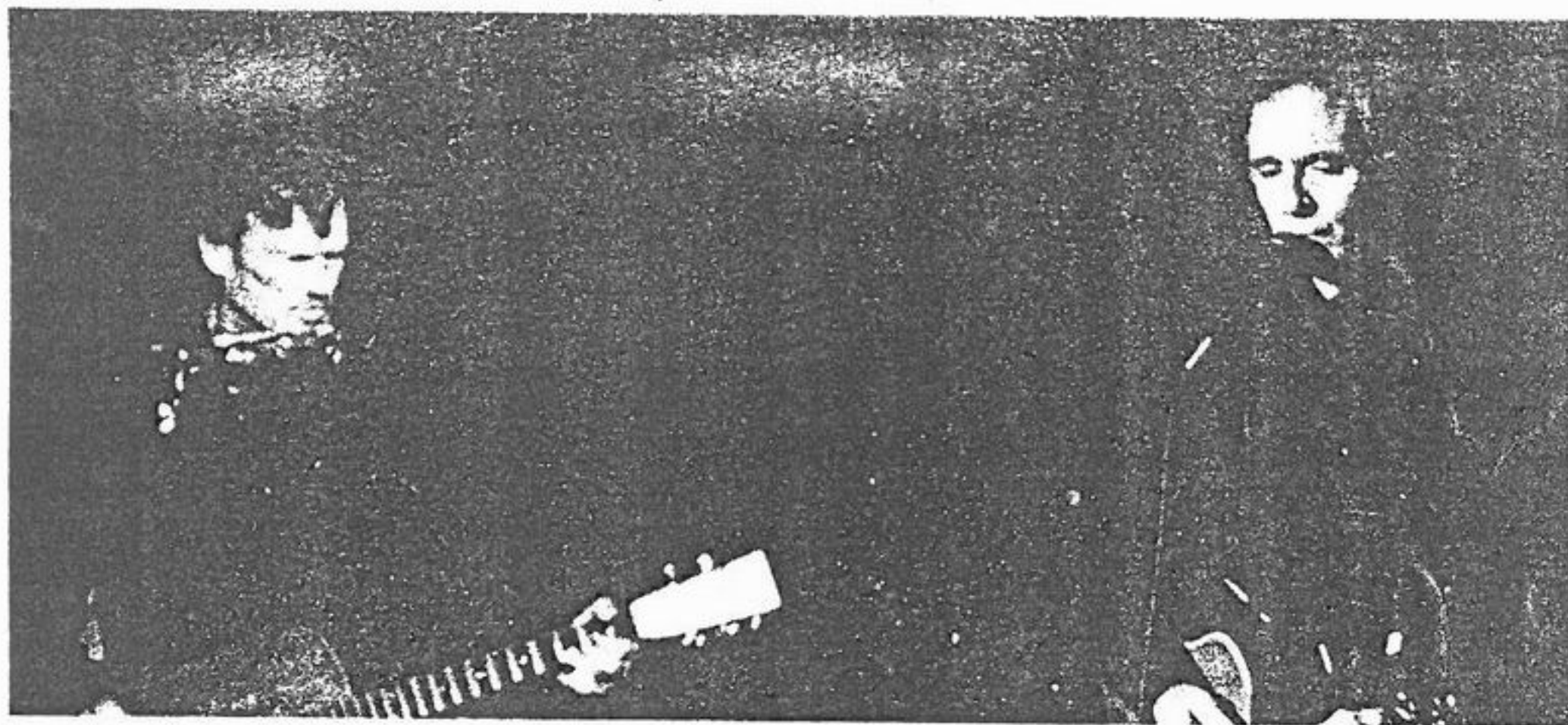
WHILE University of Limerick president Dr Edward Walsh might not be a popular music fan, his endeavours have now ensured that Limerick will not lose out on any major groups touring Ireland.

For it was the brilliant idea of Dr Walsh in setting up the University of Limerick Foundation, which has brought about the new £15 million advanced research educational complex incorporating the 1,100-seater concert hall.

The Johnny Cash/Kris Kristofferson and Finbarr Wright concerts, held last week, showed that if you bring the right performers, there is an audience in Limerick which will pay the money to see them.

The acoustics in the concert hall are absolutely magnificent and Johnny Cash paid the ultimate tribute when he said he said that it was one of the best venues he has ever played.

Naturally, there were a number of teething problems, and perhaps promoters in future might allocate seats by numbers, rather than having people dashing in for the best seats.



Kris Kristofferson and John Cash playing at the University Concert Hall, last week.

The Progressive Democrat conference and a Christy Hennessy concert are among the forthcoming events.

"The concert hall is there for hire for anyone who wants to use it, for concerts, for conferences and whatever," explained a spokesman at the University.

The complex cost a total of £15 million, £10 million of which was raised by the Foundation and £5m provided by the state.

However, it is the Foundation that has been the key to the success with such well known business names at Tony Ryan, GPA, local solicitor Gordon Holmes,

American businessmen, Louis Glucksman and Chuck Feeney, and Elizabeth Shannon, now with Boston University, able to raise the money needed.

It was altruism of the highest nature by the Foundation members and those who they persuaded to fund the complex, which has been a truly remarkable story.

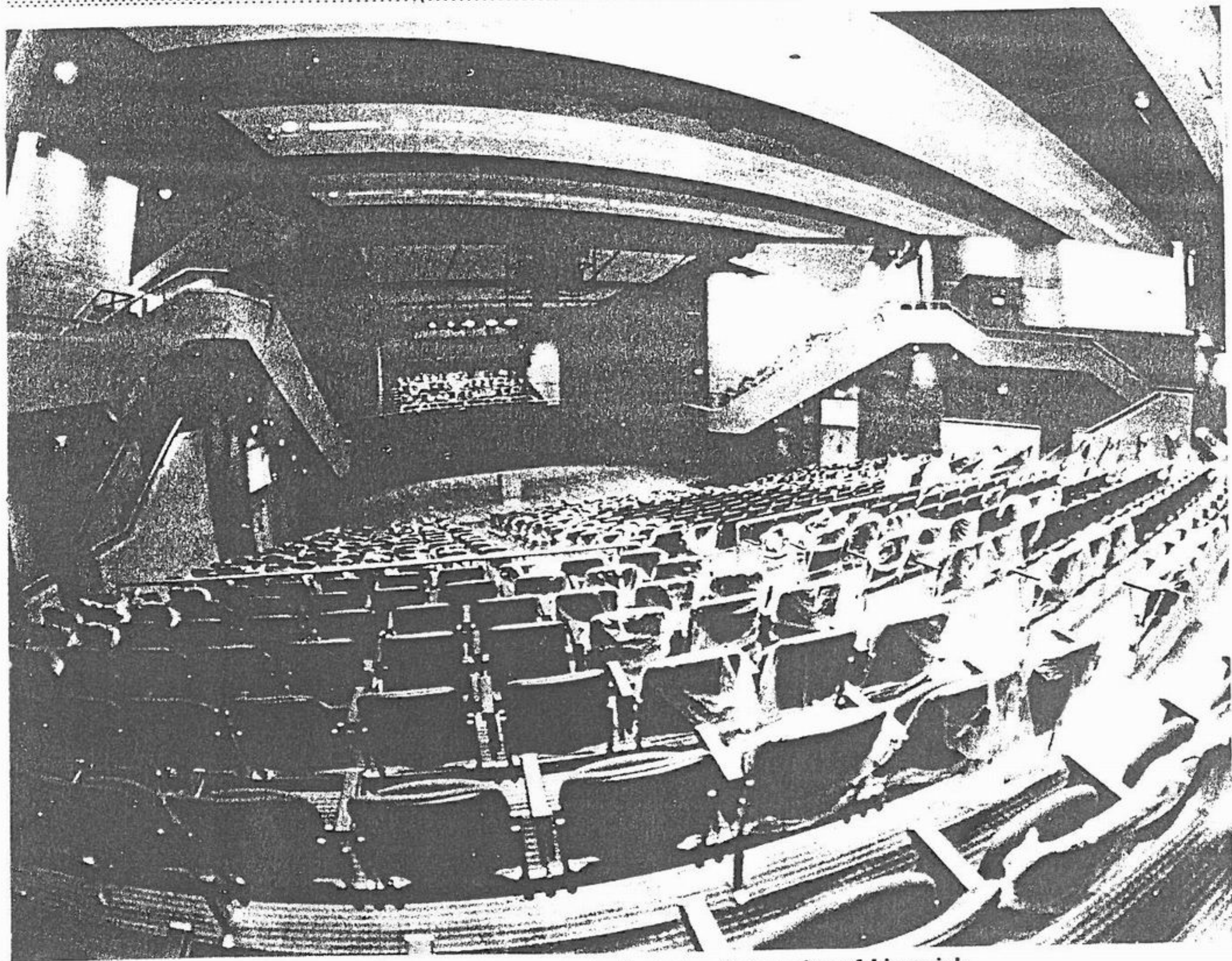
In fact there are three major lecture theatres, and a four-storey high Post-Graduate and Post-Doctorate research facility incorporating library and museum to the north with the 1,000 seater auditorium/concert hall with two lecture theatres to the

south.

This postgraduate research area facilitates some 250 students, 30 professors, 30 senior research staff and 45 post-doctorate staff together with back-up secretarial services.

These two sections are interlinked by an atrium, incorporating panoramic lifts, accommodation staircases and bridges and two art galleries.

Finally, it will be the only facility in the country to combine high technology scientific research and postgraduate studies with the best of music, painting and crafts, all of which will be handsomely accommodated in the concert hall and exhibition area.



The magnificent new concert hall at the University of Limerick.