



ENTERTAINMENT

Cinema Bums

with Andrew Rosenfeld & Tague McAvity

Beautiful Girls

A: Well, after a long break, it's time to get back to business. *Beautiful Girls* is the latest in a trend of nineties we-can't-seem-to-cope-with-life Generation X films. It portrays the lives of a group of late-twenty-somethings who have been together since high school, and who have yet to progress beyond that point.

T: Reminiscent of *Reality Bites* and *Singles*, the movie moves along without really going anywhere. The main character, Willy, goes back to his home town for a high school reunion. But you see, things are not as simple as they seem - Willy is troubled by a few key decisions he's trying to make, such as where he and his girlfriend really stand and whether or not he should quit playing the piano and get a job as an office supplies salesman.

A: Ah, life's most difficult choices. You managed to forget the whole mess with that unrealistically precocious 13 year old girl, Marti. You see, Willy is so taken with this girl that he's willing to throw away everything. Weird. WEIRD. Oh well. Cute to some, I guess. On a completely different note, I actually liked the more or less pointless nature of the movie, the way it just sort of ambled along. Like our reviews. Relaxing, perhaps reassuring.

T: Exactly, 13. Man, that is just disturbing. But he finally decides that it just wasn't meant to be, yet. And the two decide to "stay in touch". He even gave her a strange speech were he likened their situation to that of Winnie the Pooh and Christopher Robin, and that sooner or later Marti would outgrow him.

A: Well, that was a notable point. *She* would outgrow *him*, the 28 year old. He at least admitted to his lack of maturity.

T: Meanwhile, in this small town where nothing changes, Willy's friends have been developing some dilemmas of their own. Tommy, played by Matt Dillon, was the hero at his high school, and had dreams of making something of himself. Now, ten years later, he plows snow for a living and cheats on his current girlfriend with his now married high school sweetheart. Tommy is faced with choosing between a girl that truly loves him and a woman who truly lusts for him.

A: The rest of the gang all have problems too, but none of them are too major. Sort of like this movie.

T: This is one of those movies that might make you a little self reflective and perhaps a little depressed, but all in all I thought it was well acted and well directed, and is as good a Generation X movie as any other.

Rumble In The Bronx

T: Jackie Chan has probably close to 100 movies out there in circulation, so he is not really a newcomer to the big screen. However, his latest film, *Rumble in the Bronx*, is his first attempt at breaking into the North American market.

A: And hopefully his last. Compared to Jet Li in big Hong Kong flicks like the Wong Fei Hong and Fung Sai Yuk series, this is really sorry. The whole way through, I was just waiting for it to end. The best part was the very end, as you get to listen to Ash and watch how they did all the stunts, as well as a few nasty blooper shots.

T: Well, up until now, Andrew and I have agreed at least generally as to the caliber of a movie. I believe that, yes, the movie itself was not as high gloss or mainstream as most action movies, but it certainly had a strange appeal all its own. The fact that Chan does all his own stunts is amazing, as were all of his stunts, even the fight scenes were well choreographed. And although the acting and plot were about as thin as Saran-Wrap, I was still sufficiently entertained for the entire movie.

A: I disagree entirely. This movie was just bad acting with bad fight scenes. Can you believe it? Bad fight scenes! However, there should have been more, even if they weren't really all that exciting - anything to keep us away from that horrible voice-over.

T: The thing is that Jackie Chan is a serious stunt man, not a serious actor. If you go to this movie expecting to be dazzled by a wonderfully imaginative plot or an Oscar caliber performance, then you will be disappointed, it would be like going to Rambo looking for an element of romance. Chan also has a good sense of humor which is carried on throughout the movie from his underwear clad experience with the bikers at the first of the movie right through until he runs the bad guy down in the hovercraft; it's all tongue in cheek.

A: No. This movie is sad. I wasn't looking for great acting. I wasn't looking for great plot. I was looking for great action. Not here, folks. I'd take some unreal crazy fantasy fight over this supposed realism anytime. And take away the poor fight scenes, and what's left? The lamest filler conceivable. I find myself reminded of *Power Rangers*. I can honestly say this was one of the worst movies I've ever seen on a big screen.

voice. Her sound was marvellous, never wavering or faltering, continuously hitting each note with succession. The range covered throughout 'Let It Rain', 'Birmingham' and 'Sitting on Top of the World' truly gives credit to the swirling comparisons to rock and roll legends. But anyone buying her self-titled debut album will be disappointed; a structured recorded sound after her concert set just cannot compare.

Initiating his show with the record hit single, 'I Wish You Well', Cochrane seemed unenthusiastic as he eyed the meagre turnout, and merely trudged through the lyrics. But adopting his professionalism, Cochrane and the band quickly regrouped after the first few tunes and proceeded to present an excellent performance.

Although Cochrane occasionally fails to hit the high note as he could in his

prime, he managed, for the most part, to successfully reproduce the rousing yells that appear on album versions of several songs. Perhaps the greatest treat was his solo performance of 'Good Times'. Standing alone with only his acoustic guitar as company, Cochrane truly demonstrated the beauty of live music.

Of course, in the spirit of arena shows, the bands had their amps violently cranked. While several concertgoers complained afterwards about the loudness overpowering the vocals and hurting their ears, the simple solution lies in the purchase of earplugs which filter out the level of bass and reverberations, while allowing for a much more enjoyable experience.

While they may not have been received by quantity, they absolutely answered with quality, generating appreciation for those present.

The diamond core of rock and roll



Smiley - so energetic, they don't all fit in one photo

by Andrew Titus
Brunswickan Entertainment

Sometimes hating everything is too easy. I used to think it was the food I was eating that was making me feel like this, or the stress of mid-terms, or high winter bills; but now I know what it is. It's February - the damp cold, the final, irritating tense stretch of sleep before spring. It's the anticipation of warm weather, sneakers and summer. But what can you do about what time of year it is? I did what I think most people do - found some friends and went to a bar to find some solace. But what I found was more than I could have bargained for. A cure! The diamond core of rock and roll.

Humfat, a Moncton band, and Fredericton's own Smiley, rocked and rolled. As a matter of fact, they rolled straight on through last call, and right up to closing time. And they did so for exactly the right reason: because they love it. Because without performance, music is nothing more than self-indulgent naval gazing. And that's why people stayed. On a Wednesday night! Because they got the cure for February.

For the most part, Humfat, a power trio with loads of musical talent and diversity, played an eccentric blend of originals and (original) covers. They mixed jazz and reggae with country and metal can blues, and they did it all with tongue firmly planted in cheek. Their music is fun - and no matter how wishy-washy that sounds, it's exactly what I mean. No pretensions, no veils of grandeur - just well orchestrated, well improvised music and a farmyard backdrop with a rainbow over the top.

The serious off-handedness and spontaneous jamming of Humfat was well complimented by the energetic, sharpened tone of Smiley, another trio composed of guitarist/singer Alex Madsen, drummer Alison Hovey and bassist Jeff Wheaton. Doing all original songs, Smiley smiled all the way through their set, each backing the other up in the way a trio is meant to - by making a solid musical space for each musician.

The thing that impressed me was how tight Smiley was, how well they all worked together, and after only having been together for two months. When I talked with them, though, it became obvious why they were so tight - because they are completely dedicated to their music and to bringing the alternative music scene together. This might not come as such a big surprise to some people, but believe or not for every one band whose members are actually dedicated to their own music and to music in general, there's twenty whose members either couldn't care less, or only cared for their own gain. And that's why they were the cure for February; because just as I started to really slump under the burden of what is actually the longest month of the year, I saw some life, and some dedication and well-focused intention.

From here, they'll only get better. And so, if you're ever walking down the street and you see a sign that says 'Humfat tonight at -' or 'Smiley, one night only -'; go, I swear they'll rock your socks off.



Heeeeeere's Tommy!

Photo by Warren Watson

Full card, empty seats

by Peter J. Cullen
Brunswickan Entertainment

Two Canadian rockers and over three hours of entertainment - only half price! But not many took advantage of Monday's bargain discount when Tom Cochrane and Amanda Marshall played the Aitken Centre. Despite performing for under 1,000 fans, the groups left all dour feelings in their dressing rooms and marked their Fredericton show with performances at a level that no doubt met the expectations of those in attendance.

Amanda Marshall definitely lived up to her label as an energetic live presence, constantly dancing across the stage and flapping her free hand along to the rhythm. Her whirlwind hair seemed to draw applause by itself.

Aside from physical action, the most remarkable feature has to be Marshall's