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# BNL rocks the Cohn

BY DANIEL CLARK

Despite "Garthmania", and the impending fury of a lady named Hortense, there was only one place to be Friday night. The Barenaked Ladies were in town, and playing Dalhousie's own Rebecca Cohn Auditorium.

Opening for the Toronto foursome was a beautiful singer named Damhnait Doyle. Doyle, who's current single "A List of Things" is burning up local play lists, has quite possibly the most powerful vocals I have ever heard. She reminds me of a young Tina Turner blasting out CCR's "Proud Mary".

Doyle rocked the audience for the better part of an hour. She played an exhilarating selection from her new album *Shadows Wake Me*. Keep your eye on this girl; I predict that you will be hearing more from her soon.

During the intermission the audience piled out into the foyer, many heading straight to the souvenir stand where Doyle's CD was being sold. I spoke the salesman at the end of the evening, and he told me that they went through a week's supply of CDs in one night.

As I sat in my seat waiting for the Ladies to take the stage, I was already writing headlines like "Doyle beats the clothes off BNL." These headlines were quickly scrapped.

The band burst on to the stage surging through two numbers from their octo-platinum (800,000 albums in Canada) CD *Gordon*: "Box Set" and "Crazy".

With an energy that defied their hectic schedule, the Barenaked Ladies steamrolled through "Straw Hat and Old Dirty Hank" and "This Is Where It Ends", from their new CD *Born On A Pirate Ship*. In between they improvised a song about the misshapen Rebecca Cohn. The band's ability to create original pieces off the top of their heads never ceases to amaze me.

The band has undergone a serious change in the last year. Andy Creegan, a founding member who played keyboard, left the band to pursue his own interests. His brother, Jim, decided to stay with the band, and still plays bass. Andy's replacement, Kevin Hearn, was allowed to show his stuff with a solo called "This Is It".

Of the new addition Jim Creegan says, "Kev brings a whole new dynamic and rhythm to the band and the music. The way he plays, he is able to maintain the energy we had with Andy."

The band then played four new songs: "Stomach vs Heart",

"I Know", "Break Your Heart", and "Same Thing". These were surrounded by three 1994 hits "Jane", "Life, In A Nutshell", and "Alternative Girlfriend".

As the concert started to wind up the band played a medley of hits from all their albums including "Be My Yoko Ono", "The Old Apartment", and "If I Had \$1,000,000".

For the first encore BNL let the dust settle on the amps, and pulled out some fan favourites from *Gordon*. In rapid succession they played "What A Good Boy" and "Brian Wilson".

Just to tease the crowd the band ran off stage again. After a few minutes the unceasing cheering forced them back on stage. In typical BNL fashion they finished off the set with a Madonna cover. Friday night it was "Material Girl".

Their critics have stated that BNL have lost the "touch", the energy, and everything that made them a sensation in 1992. Despite this being the sixth month of a seven month tour, the Barenaked Ladies performed with as much energy and zeal as they have ever had.

Page jumped around, did somersaults, and generally expended more energy than Andre Agassi in his matches with Pete Sampras. Ed Robertson, the lead guitarist, strutted, did an Elvis Presley impression, and expended great wit.

I asked drummer Tyler Stewart how the band was feeling, and if they were tired. He said, "Sure we're tired. We would like nothing more than to get home and relax. This is the 90th date on this tour. But the energy, the adrenalin we get from being on stage just pushes us past that."

The Cohn may be a misshapen architectural nightmare, but if the band is really kicking, then the electricity has the ability to turn the place into a melting pot of kinetic energy on overload. "Call it impulsive, call it compulsive, or call it insane."



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