

Grape Expectations

Interview by Dragos Ruiu

The weirdest thing that bassist Chris Hooper of the Grapes of Wrath can remember is being attacked by a machete wielding bouncer in Tampa, Florida—after a bunch of skinheads thrashed the hall where they were playing. "But so many exciting things happen to you when you are touring, it's hard to remember them all," he says.

The Grapes are facing a different sort of excitement now, because their second album just went 'gold.' "But I still have only two hundred bucks in my bank account," Chris complains jokingly.

The other thing the Grapes have to be excited about is a new tour with Sarah McLachlan which is starting this Saturday. "We wanted to do a tour of small theaters

"it's kind of a drag. I'd prefer to be at the second show—but both audiences will get the same one hour show." He chalks up the last minute addition to "the nature of promoters."

As for the kind of show that the Grapes will do, Chris says, "It's going to be mostly stuff from our new album. We aren't going to try to recreate the sound of the album—we are going to try some variations. We'll throw in a piano part where we had a guitar, and we'll try a different approach."

But the concert should maintain the jangly, classic, twelve-string sound they have cultivated on their latest album. The band's sound is not surprising, considering they list the Beatles and Simon and Garfunkel as their greatest influences.

The three original Grapes got together in 1976 while in school. "I started to play guitar in grade six," says Chris. Two of the band members, Tom and Chris Hooper, are brothers. "We played well together, because we both learned to play with each other. When we first got together, we needed a bass player—and because Tom was the better guitar player I took up the bass."

The Hoopers actually split off from Kevin Kane for a while and then reformed The Grapes in 1983. "Tom and I started getting into hardcore punk," says Chris, "and Kevin was into more experimental music like Siouxsie and the Banshees and Pere Ubu. But eventually we got bored of playing just three chords so we got together again—we never really stopped hanging around together, and when we all became more mellow we reformed the band."

The Grapes formed in Kelowna, but they consider themselves a Vancouver band these days. "We moved out here six years ago, so we consider this our base now." Vancouver was where their initial signing with Capitol/Nettwerk records happened.

"In 1984 we got some money together and recorded a four song EP tape. It was passed on to one of the guys at Nettwerk and he liked it. He saw us while he was checking out another band down the street and he liked



'Peel me a grape'
— Mae West

We're keyed up,
and we're ready to
rock.

instead of bars, and it seemed like a natural thing. She was already on the same Nettwerk label as us, and we got along — so one thing led to another, and here we are."

The Edmonton date is the first stop on their tour, which should take them to "all the major cities in Canada," with the exception of the Maritimes which "are being worked on right now," says Chris. The Grapes will also be doing a date by themselves at the U of C's MacEwan Hall before they come here and perform. The format of the tour, which has the Grapes co-headlining with Sarah McLachlan, has each band doing a sixty minute show.

The news of the second show, which was hastily added after brisk ticket sales, came as a kind of surprise to Chris; who thought that

us. After a while we got signed."

After that their career took off. They started touring heavily and opened for some acts like Robyn Hitchcock, the Woodentops, and Suzanne Vega. The Grapes' second album, *Treehouse*, was produced by Tom Cochrane and earned them much acclaim and recogni-

tion.

The Grapes are excited about starting off this latest tour. "We love it. Touring gets monotonous after a while—sleep, wake up and play, sleep, wake up and play—but I love going out to tour. We're keyed up, and we want to rock."

The Month in Entertainment

by Ron Kuipers

Woah! September's gone already. I can hardly believe it. This month has just whipped by. Anyways, seeing as this issue of *The Gateway* is going off campus (along with CJSR's *Airtight*, which you should definitely check out), I thought I should give you a little retrospective on the entertainment stories that have been covered in *The Gateway* this month, as well as a look ahead to see what's coming up.

The first issue covered many of the events that took place this summer. We took a look back at the hugely successful **Fringe Festival** here in Edmonton, and mentioned that a few plays were carried over in Edmonton's **Son of Fringe**. One such play **Orgasmo Adulto Escapes from the Zoo**, was reviewed in our second issue. It received a somewhat unfavourable review, and that review was met with some criticism. This was great for me to hear, because it meant that people were interested in reading and criticizing the entertainment section. This is a trend that I would like to see continue. Neither I or the writers in this section are above criticism, and response from our readers is of paramount importance. In fact, you'll find that in today's letters to the editor section, I have been shown another side of an opinion. I can't underline enough the importance of this kind of criticism.

The first issue also contained an interview with a local group—**One Eyed Wendy**. This is something I'm trying to do more often. Good local bands need and deserve this kind of exposure. You'll find an interview with Edmonton's **Imagineers** in this issue.

In the subsequent issues we have given quite a bit of coverage to things going on at the **ESO**. What more can be said, except that Mayer and Co. continue to do a great job offering Edmontonians a variety of world-class symphony music.

Our third issue contained a somewhat different type of story. We usually don't run news stories in entertainment, but **CJSR's** boycott of **Polygram Records** was a news story with an entertainment focus. Polygram

feels it necessary to charge radio stations a service fee to play and promote their material—an absurd concept to say the least. Anyways, I had put much research into the issue and, after deliberation among the editors, *The Gateway* editorial staff agreed to join the boycott. I believe that we are the first college paper to take this step. I hope more University papers will follow our lead.

We added to these stories our usual batch of record, movie, and play reviews. I hope that we managed to cover enough ground to satisfy everyone, but if we haven't, please let me know. As I mentioned earlier, your criticism can only help improve the quality of the section.

Looking ahead, **SNFU** will call it quits this Friday with their last show at the Polish Hall—a somewhat tragic end to an Edmonton underground music legacy. We'll have a review of that concert. In addition, I hope to continue to feature local bands, and dig up the story on what the disbanded dudes of **SNFU** will be doing.

So if I missed anything let me know. If you have some ideas, by all means come on up to room 282 SUB and bounce them off me. For now, I hope you've been enjoying *The Gateway*—and I hope we can continue to put out a quality product. For our first off-campus readers, I hope you dig what we do too! Happy hunting everyone.

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