

by Ken Lenz

The Gateway recently approached one of Edmonton's 'alternative' music bands, Backstreet, for an interview. Drummer Steve Campbell and lead guitarist Wade Mosher showed up haggard and weary after a crazed weekend of sonic overstimulation. We talked for a while about the virtues of leather pants, existentialism, journalism and other such nonsensical things which have since been edited from this article because of the boring, distasteful nature of these topics to most people. After botching the first take on a wretched, hideous Gateway taperecorder, we got it right the second time around on an equally wretched, hideous machine.

So, for all you nocturnal daydreamers, here it is...

Gateway: Could you tell me a little about the history of Backstreet, and where are the other two guys right now?

advantage. Why is Backstreet sticking to the traditional, bass-rhythm-lead-drums sound?

Steve: I think that the new, new music is not so much new, it is just using technology to create songs in the same manner they have always been done. We find it more challenging to break down the traditional restrictions with the traditional method.

Wade: A lot of new bands come across cold and miserable, alienating their audience. We are trying to bring a melancholy warmth to the people who are listening.

Gateway: Could you elaborate a little on the 'cold and miserable' part of your last statement?

Steve: I think that a lot of bands are pissed off with the way things are going in society. They think that, because their audience must feel the same way, they can create a bond with their audience by being 'eerie, cold and miserable.'

Gateway: Does Backstreet have a political dimension?

"We often exchange sexual partners because it helps us work better as a unit."

Steve: Terry and Tim had a golfing appointment so they couldn't make it today. I don't think anyone really cares how we got together but we have been together for over two years now and are discovering some definite advantages to working together for so long. Getting used to each others' styles and moods are a couple obvious advantages.

We're good friends, we get drunk together on weekends, we often exchange sexual partners because we think it helps us work better as a unit.

Gateway: A lot of bands today are using technology, i.e. synthesizers, to their

Wade: The music isn't really political as much as it is social. Most of the songwriting I do comes as a thought of the moment. A lot of the songs are focused on individuals in everyday life, something people can identify with.

Steve: It's not so much trying to deal with the problems as it is just presenting them. Someone in the audience, just by hearing in a song that a problem they may be faced with does exist with other people as well might make them feel a little less alone.

Gateway: Which groups have influenced Backstreet's music?

Steve: We don't like talking about influences for the simple reason that it offends many people who have strong feelings either for or against a particular band. Suffice it to say that we have been influenced from everything from classical music to punk rock.

Wade: We aren't trying to copy anybody else as much as we are trying to develop our own sound and style of music.

Gateway: So what sort of audience is Backstreet trying to reach?

Steve: We're not shooting for any particular section of society, we are basically just looking for people who are a little more into music than the average Joe who only listens to CHED on the way home from work.

Gateway: How do you go about writing songs from the time you first think about an idea to the finished product?

Wade: Usually, about one o'clock in the morning, I get my guitar in my bed, with my Winnie the Pooh pyjamas on, my Star Wars sheets and my ET pillow and write the lyrics first. It usually takes a couple of months to work out the complete melody because I have about 25 songs laying around at any one time. When I am finally finished it's like having an emotional orgasm.

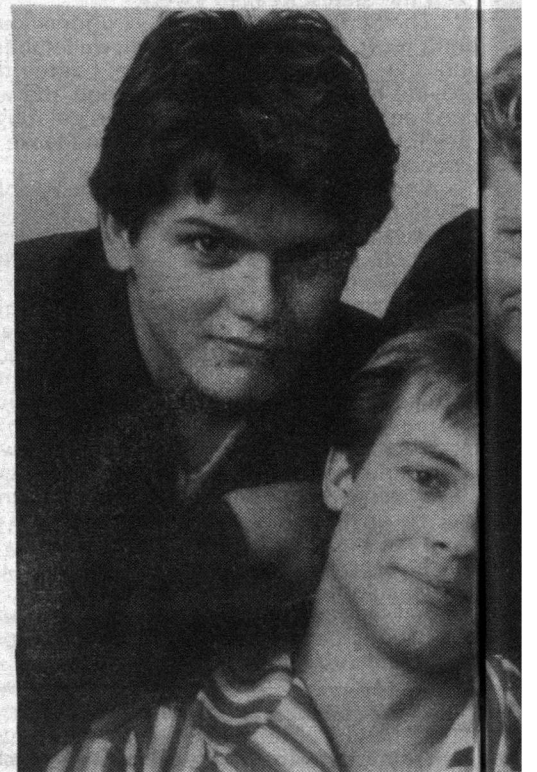
Gateway: How does the band choose what to play, do you play mostly covers for originals?

Steve: Covers are played mostly out of necessity right now, to give people something to compare us with. We hope to play enough around the city so people can recognize our originals. Once we do that we plan on dropping all our covers unless there is one that we like and we think we do a particularly good version of it.

Wade: Right now we are doing some covers which are sort of unusual. It's hard finding out what people in Edmonton want to hear so right now we are doing a version of 'Billie Jean' by Michael Jackson, just because it's a lot of fun.

Gateway: Do you have trouble reaching people in Edmonton specifically?

BAS



Left to right: Lead- Wade Mosher; Vocals; Steve Campbell

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