

Shakin' Chinook

Secret Surface
Worm Decay Project
Ev Laroi
Chinook Theatre

review by Mac Hislop

Chinook Theatre. Saturday evening. Feature: an evening of experimental music drawing on the talents of Ev Laroi, the Worm/Decay Project and Secret Surface.

The Chinook Theatre was an ideal site for this performance. The theatre's set up enhanced one's sense of participation in the event. Good use was made of the theatre's space, with the lighting well crafted in this respect. The overall arrangement helped make the evening's musical scores more accessible than they might have been in another venue.

As the evening progressed, the theatre gradually filled to about three-quarters capacity. The audience was rather varied. There were the young punkoids, the "look at me and my hair" crowd, the "I'm so intense and musically cognizant" types, students, and a number of devotees who could only be moms and dads.

Ev Laroi took to the stage first, acoustic guitar in hand. His set was a mixture of original and cover scores which went over very well. The audience was brought into contact with Mr. Laroi and his music in such a way that an objective view was effectively precluded.

Mr. Laroi had a good command of the pieces he chose to play. His original scores were especially enjoyable, even though their titles do not come to mind. Furthermore, he established a good rapport with the audience between tunes bringing all more into touch with what he was doing. Noteworthy were covers he did of "Heaven" and "State-trooper" (does anybody know who does the original of the latter?).

There was a great deal of honesty in Mr. Laroi's performance. He showed himself to be willing to accept the risks of performance and he avoided studiously the allure of pretensions. If anything, Mr. Laroi might gain further command of his voice to extend better the effect of his guitar work. He certainly got the evening off on a positive footing.

Next on stage — the Worm/Decay Project. Having cranked the carbon dioxide smoke machines to create that ethereal effect, much to their consternation, the smoke set off the fire alarms. So much for that neat effect. In getting their very short set off the stage, the dual bothers of the alarm and the very annoying buzz in the speakers only contributed to the general tone of their opening number.

At first, Mr. Taylor on synths and Mr. Worm on some weird keyboard unit, created an incredibly impersonal and humanly void environment on stage rather more by accident than by design. But, this was not the tone of their set. From the anarchial and disconcerting start, reminiscent of the warm ambiance created by a loudspeaker sporadically gurgling martial music in an empty arena, Mr. Decay's entrance on stage swept away this impersonal air.

Taylor and Worm created a most interesting electronic sound — like a Heaven 17 sound produced by a late 70's Malcolm McLaren during a thunder storm. Decay with a rather intriguing voice — David Bowie meets Johnny Rotten — made the efforts of his cohorts accessible, and the set human.

Starting with "Government Says", they easily moved into a superb tune probably entitled "Send Me Back to the Factory". Congratulations! They deserve an audience for that tune alone. As a whole, their music was very interesting engendering a broad range of possibilities. It is a shame that this performance was the Worm/Decay Project's last.

Secret Surface. If anyone had any doubts as to why Mark Wasarab and Esbern Dresen were this "gig's" headliners, these doubts were quickly dispelled. It is virtually impossible to come up with an adequate description of their performance.

If crowd response is an indicator, they went over extremely well. Both musicians enjoyed a superb command of their respective instruments: Mr. Wasarab guitar and Mr. Dresen on keyboards. Each note was an exploration; and idea discussed over coffee in an unpretentious bistro. Working off a rhythm line set down by the drum machine, they meandered about, each playing off the

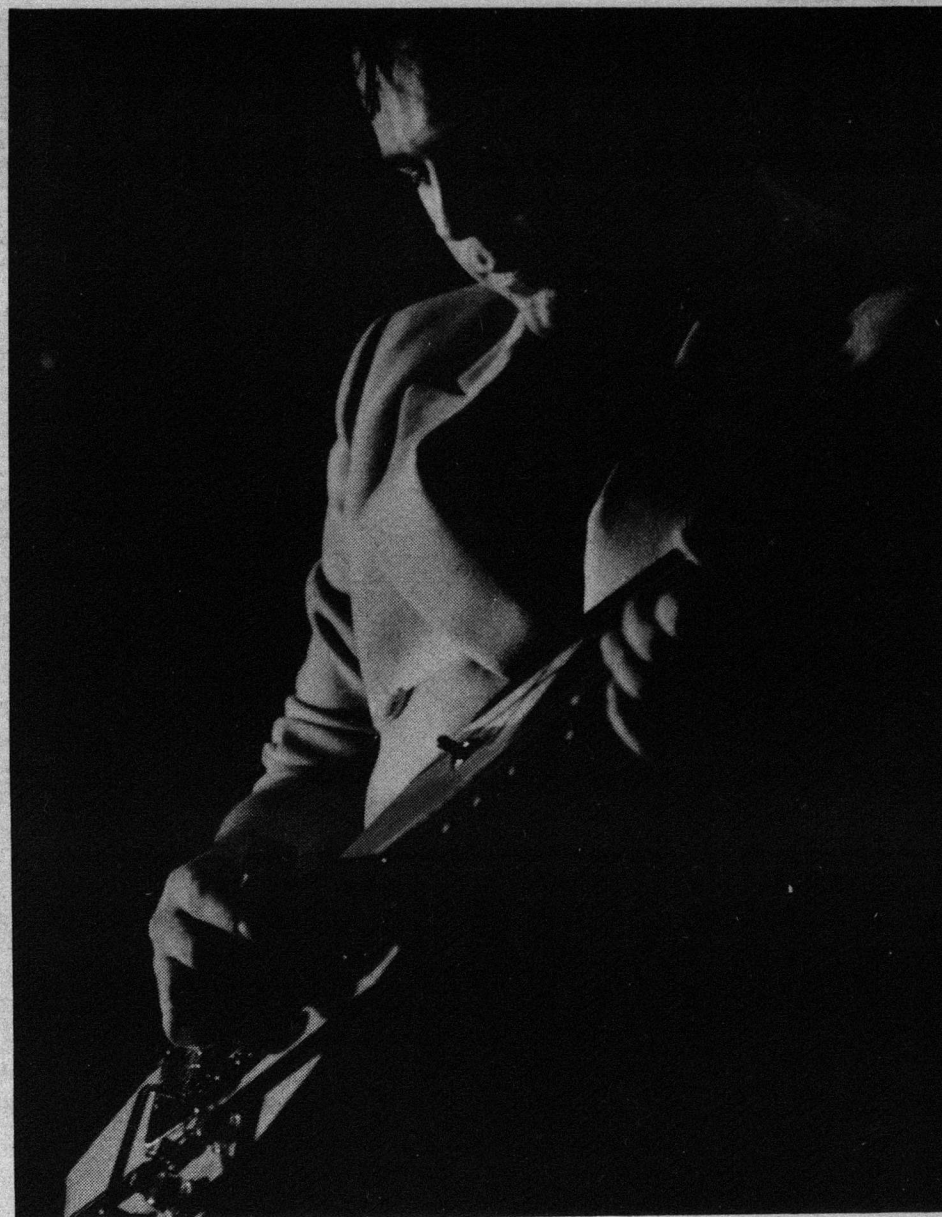


Photo Marc Tremblay

Mark Wasarab of Secret Surface; each note was an exploration

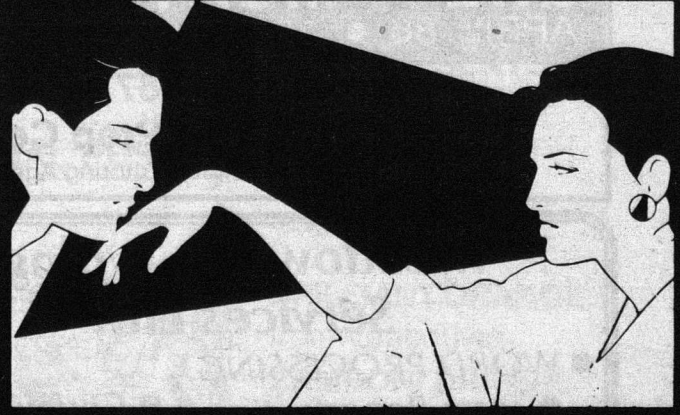
other, each building on the sound of the other — much like a great conversation.

The risks were evident and they worked superbly, as did the entire performance. Mr. Wasarab took the guitar, musically, to places most people have never conceived. If anything, the two of them could have indulged themselves more and further explored their ideas with no loss of audience interest. To catch Secret Surface in performance is a mus-

ical must for anyone even slightly into music. Enough said, you must experience them for yourself.

In sum, the evening's performance illustrated what Edmonton's music scene can produce. The city needs more musical events of this sort and musical units willing to move beyond the narrow dictates of the local market. Good show all!

JAMES R. PETERSEN

THE
**PLAYBOY
ADVISOR**
ON

LOVE & SEX

A **SUB THEATRE** Lecture Presentation
Tuesday, March 25 - 7:30 pm
Free of Charge — Open To The Public


TRAVEL CUTS
OFFERS YOU
A GLORIOUS TIME IN
MEXICO
Spend 16 days in MAZATLAN or 12 days
in PUERTA VALLARTA
MAZATLAN FROM \$599.00*
APRIL 26 — May 12
PUERTA VALLARTA FROM \$619.00*
APRIL 27 — MAY 9
INCLUDES:
• Round trip flights
• Complimentary inflight meals & snacks
• 12 or 16 nights accomodation
• Return transfers to hotel
• Welcome cocktail briefing
• CMY tour
• Fiesta night
* Plus \$45.00 Taxes
TRAVEL CUTS
Main Floor SUB U of A 432-2592
or 10424 118 Ave Edmonton 471-8054
TOLL FREE 1-800-272-5615