

MUSIC

Blue Rodeo
Grad Lounge, Oct. 26 & 27
by Rupert Pupkin

Every so often a local band comes along and reminds you why you used to spend so much time getting smokey clothes and ringing ears in dirty, loud, music clubs. Toronto's Blue Radio is such a group. Various labels as rock, country, and the newly-coined "urban country," this tight five-piece rocked the cleaner, friendlier confines (and I mean *confines*) of the Grad Lounge last Monday and Tuesday nights.

Though it's been said far too many times about Toronto acts (The Sharks, The Parachute Club, L'Etranger, etc.) Blue Rodeo seems to have a real shot at the big time; that is, if they can retain the song-writing skill and performance chemistry they are currently displaying night after night on the grueling Canadian club circuit.

The band is stacked with talent from top to bottom; both Greg Keelor and Jim Cuddy are top-notch

vocalists and guitar players, while drummer Cleave Anderson and bassist Basil Donovan throw a few new wrinkles into a traditional rock-and-roll rhythm section. Bobby Wiseman, on keyboards, is an act in himself—he's been known to play with his feet while hanging from the rafters during one of his wild and (judging from the audience response Monday night) well-appreciated solos.

For a group with only one album to its credit, Blue Rodeo has a wealth of strong material, from straight-ahead rockers like "Heart like mine," and "Live it up while it's Still Legal" (inspired by graffiti from the walls of Queen Street's Cameron House), to moody pop gems like "Underground" and their first hit single, "Try"—which Keelor declined to play on Monday night because of an ailing throat.

But if Keelor's condition was a problem for the band, you wouldn't have guessed it from the enthusiasm of Cuddy, or from the band's spirited, two-a-night, 60 minute+ sets. Covers of Elvis Costello and Bob Dylan's "Queen Jane Approximately" more than made up for any deleted tunes, and the band played two encores before the audience

finally let them off the hook, sometime about 1:30 a.m.

Though he was having obvious difficulties co-ordinating his customary bounces with the looming concrete ceiling of the Grad Lounge, Cuddy didn't seem to mind. On more than one occasion he extolled the virtues of playing a small room, particularly one with such a nice view. "It's like a King's court in here," Cuddy said on Tuesday night.

Clearlight
Vanier Dining Hall, Oct. 30
by Adam Kardash

One might think that Toronto has reached its satiation point with respect to Pink Floyd. After three sold-out shows at the CNE, a new Pink Floyd release, *A Momentary Lapse of Reason*, a Roger Waters solo effort, *Radio Kaos*, and a Waters show at the Kingswood Music Theatre, all in a five-month period, it would seem logical that the Southern Ontario market has been supersaturated with the supergroup's music.

Well, not according to Clearlight, the Pink Floyd cover band who played the Vanier Dining Hall last Friday. A quick glance at the band's extremely busy schedule dispels any

CHRY-FM 10 MOST PLAYED RECORDINGS

ARTIST	TITLE	LABEL	WKS.
C Rheostatics	<i>Greatest Hits</i>	X	3
C 13 Engines	<i>Before Our Time</i>	Nocturnal	3
C Various	<i>It Came From Canada (Vol. 3)</i>	OG	7
Billy Bragg	<i>The Peel Sessions</i>	Polygram	1
Leaving Trains	<i>Fuck</i>	SST	1
C Weather Permitting	<i>Into The Ground</i>	VOT	2
Bodeans	<i>Outside Looking In</i>	WEA	1
Goo Goo Dolls	<i>Goo Goo Dolls</i>	Celluloid	1
C Mourning Sickness	<i>Reaching Climax Alternatively</i>	Radical Cunts Anonymous	2
Jon Rose	<i>Forward of Short Leg</i>	Dossier	2

Note: C denotes Canadian artist(s). For the week of October 19-26, compiled by CHRY Music Department.



notions that Toronto has even come close to satisfying its appetite for Floyd.

The nine-year-old Hamilton-based band is composed of Jerry Laufman (guitars and vocals), Ken

Jaap (bass and vocals), Gerry Sika (lead guitar), Vito Bileggi (keyboards and vocals) and Mike Evers (drums and vocals). The band entertained the audience of over 100 with two one-hour sets that consisted mostly of Pink Floyd material.

"I'm happy with the turnout," stated John Saftic, the Vanier Council member and organizer of the event. "Most shows here get half as many people. These guys [Clearlight] are great. They deserve this type of response."

Clearlight's visual and acoustical reproduction of Floyd was superb. Jerry Sika's guitar work and Laufman's and Jaap's vocals sound strikingly similar to Pink Floyd's work. As well, the band is equipped with an elaborate light set-up that would certainly rival any other bar band in Canada.

"We have a \$300,000 production, and own every bit of it," says Laufman. "It's just too time/money consuming to do it any other way. That's why we work so hard. We have to pay it off."

Laufman isn't joking. The band averages over 300 shows a year and has even been noted in *Performance Magazine* as being one of the top grossing acts in North America. Although Clearlight has toured through the United States and across Canada, a large amount of their concerts are played in Southern Ontario.

"We have a bit of a following here in Toronto," explains Laufman. "But we might be a little over-exposed." Laufman says that the band handles their shows much differently in Toronto than, for example, in the Midwestern United States. Advertising rates are sky high in Toronto so the band plays more gigs and risks the "over-exposure."

"Q-107 charges \$200 for a 30-second spot on air," says Laufman. "In the mid-West we plan each individual show more as an event. The media down there give us free advertising in exchange for a \$1 take off every ticket at the door. In that situation, everyone benefits. I'm not saying that I don't like Toronto because I do. Toronto is a very generous market, not to mention that it's our home. It's just a different scene in the less dense areas of the US and Canada."

Clearlight's future plans include writing original songs, recording, and hopefully signing a contract with a recording company. According to Laufman, the band did receive some interest from Island Records but nothing ever materialized. In the near future, Clearlight plans to continue playing Pink Floyd while interspersing a few original songs in their sets.

"We're not going to play originals only," explains Laufman. "There's too much money involved. We never really wanted to be a tribute band but we're making good money playing Floyd." The band averages about \$1,500 a show. At 300 gigs a year, Clearlight grosses approximately \$450,000 a year. Not bad for a cover band. Clearlight will be playing a number of Toronto venues in the upcoming month.

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