

ENTERTAINMENT

Pope fans' appetites more than satiated

Rough Trade
Prime Time
January 14

Review by Patrice Struyk

The whole scene had a rather tribal feeling to it: Rough Trade's characteristic throbbing, hypnotic backbeat, followers (mostly male) swaying in front of the stage, and Carole Pope holding court on the stage.

Rough Trade is one of those bands with a small (in Canada) but devoted cult following, who packed into a sold-out Prime Time to see their Pope on Saturday night. Appearing somewhat tired, perhaps due to the gruelling tour schedule they have, Carole Pope was not the sexual tigress on stage that she's reputed to be, but rather, more like a playful mama cat. Even so, her disciples were satisfied.

Starting the show with "All Touch", the band got the crowd on the dance floor right away. Greatly influenced by R&B, Rough Trade's music is, above all, danceable. After fairly restrained versions of "Weapons" and "America", Pope's sardonic suggestiveness emerged. "We've never written about sex before," she intoned dryly, launching into "Fire Down Below," adding vaguely obscene gestures to the lyrics.

Now she was warming (hotting?) up, and she didn't want to do it alone. "Does anyone feel like partying, or what?" And Pope got personal. Through "Numero Fatal" and "High School Confidential" ("now class..."), she sang directly to individuals around the stage, grabbing one guy's collar and another's tie. They loved it.

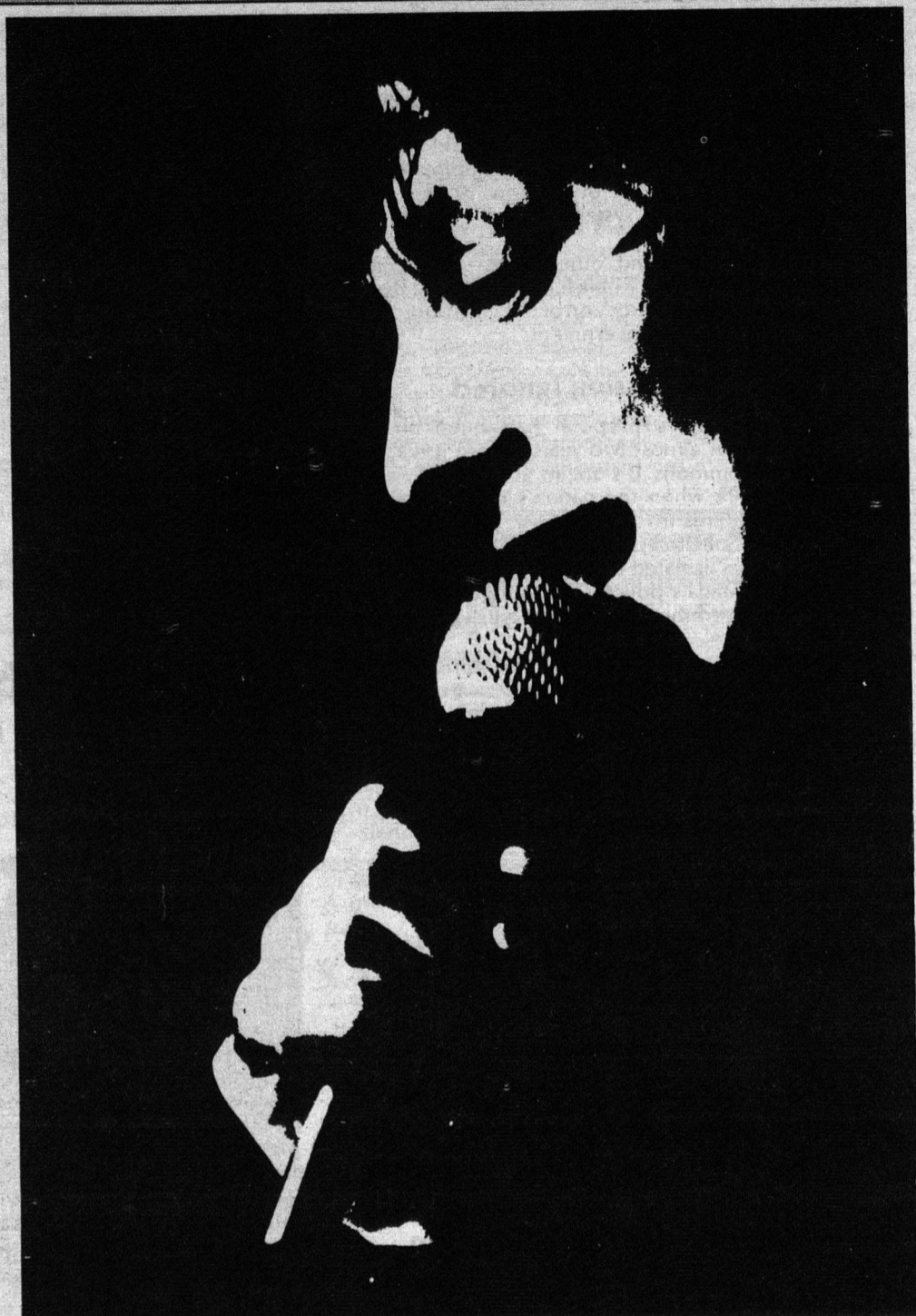
By the time the band was "shaking the foundations," the usually-composed Kevan Staples had moved from synth to guitar and was adding his own theatrics, jumping around and reaching for the sky, all with a poker-straight face.

"Here's a song that has offended a lot of people," Carole Pope clutched at her mussed jet-black hair and added, "So we're going to do it again." And after the controversial "Bloodlust," Pope baptised the audience with a glass of water and a facetious, "I always wanted to be the Pope." Then, as she called it, "another tasteless song" - "Physical Violence."

Rough Trade's music being as non-stop rhythmic and lyrically outrageous as it is, encourages movement, and the crowd seemed loathe to slow down for the forgettable "Lifeline." The song could be scrapped and never missed. It's not bad, but does detract from the momentum of Rough Trade's show. No doubt it's just coincidence that a party was leaving as Pope finished the song, but she evoked quite a laugh by saying, "Did I say you could leave? Go back to your table."

The concert was over with "If You Want It." The audience wanted it longer, and finally brought the band back for a three-song encore - a concession Rough Trade practically makes them beg for. Running up and down the (small) stage, Pope grabbed all the outstretched hands she could, sealing the attachment of her fans, among whom one little chickie was overheard saying to Gateway photographer Angela, "I would KILL for copies of those pictures." "Crimes of Passion" marked the band's exit, and everyone else's too.

A Rough Trade enthusiast myself, I went to see them with less than an open mind. Nevertheless, their performance reinforced my belief that this band is perhaps too avant-garde for the conservative Canadian market. They take the kind of chances in their music and lyrics (and even in their ultra-nouveau Japanese-designer clothes) that indicate creative, gutsy progressiveness.



Carole Pope

photo Angela Wheelock

The white African exodus described in elegant fashion

Chameleon and Other Stories
Anthology by Bill Scherbrucker
Talonbooks, 1983

review by Gilbert Bouchard

Bill Scherbrucker was born in Kenya in 1938. He moved to Canada, in the mid-

sixties. Vancouver, to be exact.

Scherbrucker was a member of a transitional generation. His father's generation were the African born colonials, who kept loads of native servants, crowded a lot about white European superiority, and lorded it over Africa with an iron croquet

mallet.

Scherbrucker's generation fought against the first native uprisings, had to come to grips with a world shaking off the delusions and illusions associated with colonialism, and tried vainly to suppress the inevitable. The next generation deserted as

fast as their little white tails could move.

Chameleon is the chronicals of this transitional generation. The story of a whole nation of men who woke up to a continent that didn't want them anymore. These are stories of the Kenyans who left, those who fought back, and those who were shot in their sleep.

But the book is more than that dry political expose. Chameleon is alive, well crafted, well plotted, and well written. And on top of all that is that it has guts; these stories are what Scherbrucker and others like him went through. It's his relatives, who lived in terror. It's his friends, who got blown up by snipers. And it's his friends who blew away the snipers in return.

The only politics in this book are where they belong - with the individual, in the private life of solitary men (not like politics at the U of A where stuffy old men dissect arguments in the rarified environment of the old ivory tower, two steps removed from everything).

For a decade the evening news has detailed the plight of millions of white Africans who were alienated, terrorized, then forced out. Their exodus was considered by most to be just and largely ignored. Chameleon is the testimony of the side of the African struggle that the guilty liberal West wants to ignore.

Chameleon doesn't apologize, doesn't whine, doesn't bitch, it just tells. Tells a story in a clean, elegant fashion.

U of A Accounting/
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SECRET
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Friday January 20

U of A Rodeo Club presents



with guests

Saturday January 21

UP & COMING

Boys Brigade
January 27

Sound FX
January 28

20 Feet
February 3

February 4
NEO A4

Tickets are available from the SUB Box Office (2nd Floor SUB) and various club members.

NOTE: These events are open only to U of A students, staff, and guests.

ABSOLUTELY NO MINORS ADMITTED! Proof of age required.

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