

## Arts cont'd

# sweet jones is in pursuit

by Jeannine Amber

Last week I put aside the scepticism that has recently kept me from venturing into a club to hear a new band for the better part of a year, and found myself at a sold out Lee's Palace listening to Toronto's own Sweet Jones.

Sweet Jones is five extremely proficient young musicians. They deliver a blend of r&b and blues with a very funky groove. They have strong vocal presence, and lyrics infused with a positive-humanist idealism.

Lead singer, lyricist and second-year York student, Charles Kotliar, delivers his 'let's all be good to one another and be happy' message while managing to stay mercifully clear of irritating optimism (this, of course, is a highly subjective comment — I realize not every one finds optimism irritating). Think of a very happy Jim Morrison meeting half of James Brown's rhythm section.

Although the band has been around less than a year, they are extremely tight. There is none of the hesitance and sloppiness sometimes plaguing new bands. Sweet Jones exudes confidence and a dedication to their craft.

According to drummer Jason Kravice (also a second-year York student), "This is what we want to do with our lives — this is our love."

But so what? Kravice is merely echoing the sentiments of every member of every band practising in every basement all over the world. That's why they all do what they do. What makes these guys any better?

The reason this band may have what it takes only partially has to do with their talent — which is undeniable. Music is (unfortunately) a business and, except in the most rare cases, talent is not enough to get a record deal. To be a success you have to hustle. But,

hustling is (unfortunately) an art. And like other arts, the success of the enterprise often resides in the practitioners ability to get his or her message across with subtlety.

This all brings me back to why I was in Lee's Palace in the first place. Kravice the drummer, also the public relations guy, is very smooth. He phoned me up and told me how much he liked *Excalibur* and what a nice telephone voice I had. And I actually fell for it. How could I resist? The man absolutely reeked of sincerity.

This is what I like about Sweet Jones. The sincerity in the delivery of their music and the sense of purpose in their pursuit of the audience is refreshing. Kravice said that all the band wants is to "play their music to the world." These are fairly lofty ambitions, hardly in the same vein as the usual 'all we want is a record deal.'

With their combination of charming business savvy, focus, motivation and definite talent, Sweet Jones has the potential to rise to the top of the Toronto club scene. All they really need is time to develop an individual sound. Given the talent, they should be capable of far more diversity and originality than I witnessed.

However, this is all excusable in a band young enough to still be



Sweet Jones played to a sold out crowd at Lee's Palace.

getting their bearings. A few of their songs did hint at a more eclectic approach to songwriting; encompassing elements of jazz and gospel. If Sweet Jones con-

tinues to explore musical terrain off the beaten path, and to encompass what they learn in their music, I am sure they will excel. Sweet Jones is a young band with

a good groove and yes, you can dance to it.

Sweet Jones will be playing at Lee's Palace April 13 and The Marquee April 27.



## platter chatter

hippycore,  
something for everyone

by Sid "Midnight" Tyson

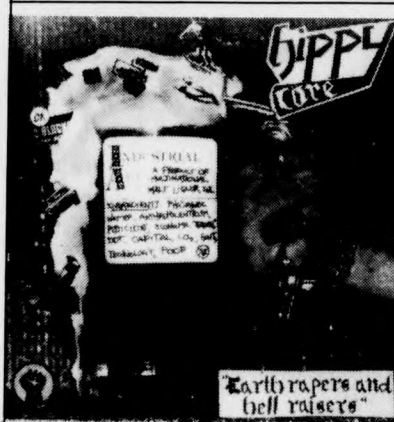
Various Artists  
*Earth Rapers, Hell Raisers*  
Hippycore Records

A 7"? In this day and age? That's right folks! Just when you thought 7" wax was dead and buried, it became the new currency for the underground. And *Earth Rapers, Hell Raisers* contains not one, but two of them documenting 12 bands from around the globe. But that's not all, you also get a 42-page information booklet. And to top it off, proceeds raised from sales go towards Earth First. Hippycore, this time you have really outdone yourself. So let's look more specifically at what is involved.

It's been two short years since 'Hippycore branched out to vinyl. This new release is the most comprehensive representation of what they are about. Originating as a fanzine publication, Hippycore operated on the principal of communication. So it's only natural for them to extend into music.

But, unlike many of their indie counterparts, Hippycore placed emphasis on the written word. This latest compilation stands as testament to their commitment. The accompanying book contains four solid articles ranging from short stories about civilization to fact-finding columns on extinction. These are broken up with information pages on the bands. It all makes for a lot of choice reading.

Musically speaking, this compilation documents the contemporary hardcore scene. But, it is more than that. *Earth Rapers, Hell Raisers* features the most current message-oriented bands of the genre (surprised?). The reason why I use message-oriented to describe the bands is because they share the aspect of having something to say.



Stylewise, on the other hand, there is something for everybody. Whether it be the cross-over appeal of *Sins of the Flesh*, the straightforward thrash of *Jesters of Chaos* or the folk-attack of *Pollution Circus*, it's all here. Some of the standouts to listen for are *Christ on a Crutch* and *Pissed Happy Children*; both equally established in the scene.

But the debut introductions of *Sam I Am* and *Conspiracy of Equals* to vinyl alone makes it worth getting. They represent what is up and coming.

However, aside from this being a fine introduction to contem-



any hardcore music, it is important to remember that the proceeds do go to Earth First. For those who don't know, Earth First is an environmental group based in Phoenix. Unlike their conservationist counterparts, Earth First promotes direct action strategies for rebuilding the wilderness. Their philosophy extends to the belief that humans are just another species and we need to find our niche on this Earth, equal in rights to every other species. It takes a very proactive animal rights stance that has developed out of the deep ecology movement; an uncompromising philosophy to match the urgency of our situation. Just what the doctor ordered.

I wouldn't recommend this for the weak at heart. There's no passive entertainment to be found here. Instead, what you get is a package that challenges the consumer with its every form. It is balanced with the right mixture of politics and music in that fine rock'n'roll tradition.

But the tradition being initiated here is one which concerns us all; the environment. Without it, everything else is just a luxury. So hopefully this record will change your mind as it has mine. It's the first step in becoming ECO-LOGICAL.

You can attain yours by sending \$6 postage paid to Hippycore c/o Jack Kahn, P.O. Box 195, Mesa, Arizona, 85211, USA.

### IBM COMPATIBLE

#### SALE



AT 80286 \$840  
MGA CARD  
640 MEG. RAM  
101 KEYBOARD  
12/16 MHz SPEED  
1.2 MEG. DISK DRIVE  
MONOCHROME MONITOR

ALSO PC-XT \$540

ONE YEAR LABOUR & PARTS WARRANTY  
LIMITED QUANTITY.

FOR MORE INFORMATION CALL  
PAKAR INDUSTRY  
COMPUTER HARDWARE & SOFTWARE DEALER.  
660-4987 OR 739-1839  
MON. TO FRI. BETWEEN 6:00 & 10:00 P.M.