

Blue Rodeo ropes the Skydiggers

By Aran McKittrick

Well the Diggers were back but this time they weren't playing a sold out show nor were they headlining the venue. The Skydiggers were the opening act for Wednesday night's McInnis Room concert featuring Blue Rodeo.

The Skydiggers played their usual simple brand of country rock which is quite catchy but has much to be developed if the band hopes to attract more than just a university following. Most of these songs con-

sisted of just one or two chords played most energetically on acoustic guitars. There were others which were more intricate however, incorporating an electric lead and some great singing from the rest of the band.

The group's singing was probably their strongest instrument. Harmonies produced by Andy Maize and Peter Cash in songs such as "Not a Penny More" and "I will Give You Everything" provided that "sing along" catchy melody which makes the Skydiggers' songs attractive to the listener. Producing a brand of R.E.M-ish shiny happy music but

with little stage presence, the Skydiggers did a fair job of warming up the audience for the main act!

"... the flailing head of Greg Keelor"

Not unlike the Skydiggers, Blue Rodeo also produced a similar style of music. Using the popular country rock style but with a bit more talent,

Blue Rodeo performed quite a good show. Though this style has become somewhat of a trend in the Canadian music industry, Blue Rodeo a good job of creating songs around it.

With Greg Keelor's raspy Elvis Costello sounding voice and the talented instrumental work of Cleave Anderson, Jim Cuddy and Bazil Donovan, Blue Rodeo produced quite a tight and professional sound. Unlike the Skydiggers however, Blue Rodeo had energy. Whether it was Jim Cuddy's subtle movement across the stage or the flailing head of Greg Keelor as he produced wailing lead

work on his guitar the presence was felt by everyone in the crowd. At one point the band even seemed to mildly shock the audience as they went into a two minute jam of alternative proportions.

Overall the two bands provided some quality entertainment but I am afraid the price of the tickets (eighteen bucks) just wasn't happening! Well anyway, let's hope that this was just the first in a series of new and interesting concerts planned for the "uni" this season. Remember you can never beat live music, so go see a local act today!

Four the Moment: Forever

by Michael Sean Morris

The vocals soared above the heads of all assembled in the Rebecca Cohn Auditorium Sunday night. Four The Moment played to a packed house on the event of its tenth anniversary. Delvina Bernard, one of its members, promised that the show would be a "family reunion", and it was.

As an added plus, the show was taped by the CBC and finally, after an exhausting four-year wait, the group will be producing a new album from the results. The family will all appear for posterity in fine digital sound, applauding, cheering, and loving, Four The Moment.

Many special guests contributed to the excitement, including George Eliot Clarke, who has written some songs for the group and two books of highly acclaimed poetry. Also, Lillian Allen provided a sample of Jamaica's own "dub" poetry. David Woods and VOICES reminisced and sang about the experiences of Black Nova Scotian life. CBC radio personality George Jordan and filmmaker Sylvia Hamilton hosted the evening, their jobs made considerably easier by a script written by Charles Saunders. The worst part about their presentation was that I really REALLY wanted to see Four The Moment. But I am nothing if not patient.

Four The Moment played two sets. In the first set they took the audience back, through their repertoire, to the days of their beginning. Sweet Honey in the Rock's "Joanne Little", the group's first song, was among these, as well as the haunting "Black Mother, Black Daughter". My only regret for the evening was that I did not bring along more Kleenex.

After a fifteen minute intermission in the hot and crowded lobby (the crowd was clearly hot hot) the audience returned to a second set and was assailed with haunting images, messages and melodies, of the love and the hate of life everywhere, black and white, in these 1990s. The songs may have been written from their experience as Black women in Nova Scotia, but a white man from

British Columbia certainly got the point, and my face was wet more than it was dry on that wonderful Sunday night.

Kim Bernard dedicated one special song to persons living with AIDS, and their loved ones. Maybe I found the song beautiful because the cause is so close to my life, but I think I would have found it beautiful anyway.

Part of the beauty of Four The Moment is the ability they give their audiences, to often appreciate for the first time an issue which they previously had no contact with.

The singing was shared, which was a delight, because I would be hard pressed to choose who has the most beautiful voice. Delvina Bernard did most of the singing in the first act, but Kim Bernard was in there also. Somewhere there is a book called "How To Sing", and it contains four words: "Sing like Kim Bernard".

Andrea Currie also took some lead vocals with confidence. I was most disappointed that Dal student Ann Marie Woods didn't sing more. A strong and striking stage presence, it would have been nice to hear her take that audience, which was already in the collective palm of the group's hand, and deliver them higher into musical heaven.

The group also brought former members Debby Jones and Jackie Barkley onstage. Though Jackie didn't sing, Debby did, and was received most warmly by the crowd. And we all got to see Jackie's new iridescent blue dress, bought specially for the occasion.

An interesting twist came near the end of the night's festivities. An unexpected and therefore pleasant surprise. Two of the group's songs had musical accompaniment. I hope this means that this next album is going to take aim at Canadian, and world, airwaves next year. Their message deserves to be heard.

Four The Moment is four very special women. Whatever incarnations they may take on, whatever victory lies ahead for them, I know they will be worthy.



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