

Entertainment

Twice the night before Saturday and all through the SUB not a creature was singing except for the pub. (hey it rhymes okay, I ain't no Dickens!)

I don't really remember the last time I saw a group of students get together to sing a mixture of Caribbean songs (not a professional band). The concept, created and produced by the Caribbean Circle came to life Friday night at *Music Festival '91* held in the SUB Cafe. Members of Caribbean Circle volunteered their time and vocal chords to the task of singing various songs including Bob Marley, Peter Tosh and Ziggy Marley while backed by UNB's Ujamaa.

First lets put this show in perspective, the singers were not all professional, nor had most even sung before an audience before, in fact most had probably only sung in their shower. For this reason, the show can not be reviewed in the same way as a Campus Entrainment event, nor could I expect to hear Bob Marley or Peter Tosh resurrected in one of these signers. However, I was pleasantly surprised to hear a level of professionalism from all who participated.

Being only the Circle's second time presenting *Music Festival* the expected problems in organization, presentation or performing 'jitters' never showed through...Well done!

The show was very well received by the large crowd that turned out to hear the varied sounds from the Caribbean. Experiencing everything from Soca and Cadance to Calypso and Reggae the audience thoroughly enjoyed the performances by members of the Caribbean Circle and Ujamaa.

I was pleasantly surprised when I strolled into the Cafe to the sounds of Ujamaa playing a Marley tune... Nice Changel (Don't get me wrong, I like the band but a little variation is nice to hear.) *One Love* was being sung by Aurelius Gordon who suited the song well allowing his voice to carry the tune similar to the Marley style.

Jabba Andrew gave the music festival a true Caribbean atmosphere when he marched onto the stage with his sunglasses, 'coffie', and dreadlocks down to his knees. Jabba and his two backup vocalists convinced me that music was not their speciality, however their enthusiasm and stage presence more than made for any short comings in the vocals. After the trio left the stage a great mixture of toasting by Mike Doherty (Ujamaa) and Chris Cox to Shabba Ranks & Maxi Priest. The energy which the two put into the song made it one of the most well received performances of the night. Geordie Haley (Ujamaa) dominated with his strong guitar rhythm and solos, and commanded the stage - once again showing the quality and showmanship making him one of the top guitarists in New Brunswick.

A new twist to student events on campus was the dance contest. After my long and drawn out student career I don't recall ever seeing anyone hold a dance contest (dance marathon once). Great idea! Surprisingly, it was well received with a large number of contestants signed up. The winning couple dancing a close resemblance to the Lambada and showed like all the contestants a real competitive spirit and enjoyment shared with the entire audience.

Africa Unite and *No Woman No Cry* sung by Mike Sutherland gave us some of the best vocals of the night. With accompaniment by Kwame Dawes (Ujamaa) during *Africa Unite* the two really gave an outstanding performance along with excellent keyboards and guitar from Ujamaa. Finally Aurelius Gordon was the last of the Caribbean Circle to sing with his rendition of *Small People* by Ziggy Marley, nice way to cap off the show.

Ujamaa's role in the event was enormous, playing with every singer along with about seven or eight of their own compositions. The only part of the night which they did not participate in was the dance competition. The amount of work which went into practicing with all of the Caribbean Circle performers and learning all of the songs (some I am sure must be new to them) must have been time consuming. The quality of their music was not perfect nor as tight as they usually are but what can you expect. They most likely began on these new songs within a month of the performance.

Steve Seabrook

Caribbean Music Festival

'91



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