

# Someone Else's Opinion

*please note: This column is for public use if you have an opinion, please give it to us.*

Once again the other day, I managed to get snared into an argument (discussion?) on the pro's and con's (mainly con's) of CHSR FM Stereo "The voice of U.N.B." I was belted with the standard complaints, usually voiced on Monday's due to someone having listened to the Sunday Afternoon and evening programming, which includes some of the more bizarre genres (i.e. Industrial music-y'know, the stuff where everyone is screaming German over the howl and grind of an industrial-sized blender?). "Play more stuff we know!" (I hear them yell as my antagonist continues his tirade). How is it that people get to know something in the first place? "Like what?" I ask. "Y'know, like local stuff, they are, after all, supposed to serve the Campus." My friend is grasping. Local stuff? How many recording acts are there in Fredericton? My usual reaction is to go on the defensive. I mean, sure, there is a lot of stuff on CHSR that I wouldn't listen to unless bound and gagged, but obviously someone does, and more power to them. It's not what you listen to, but why. "What is wrong with what they play?" (I say, rapidly losing my confidence in the intellectual conversational capabilities of my adversary). "It sucks!" "Ahh.." (I use this little stall to attempt a comeback to this which will not result in my hospitalization). How to explain?

One of the great joys of being the only living things on the planet with the capability of imagination is the ability to conceptualize, however inaccurately, what it might be like to view our world through the eyes of a being that was not familiar with any aspects of human behavior, culture, and existence. Obviously the illusion created when one attempts to visualize and conceptualize this is a fallacy, given the cortex-etched biases of ethno-centralized, pre-conceived notions of what is strange and out-of-the-ordinary, but what in fact gets conjured up is a least interesting, and can even be informative and educational to the less broad-minded. It seems to me that in the creation of this illusion, there are a few constants which would be noted throughout all society. The first is the courtship ritual (sex being the major driving force guiding all human activity), and the second would be entertainment, especially music in some form or another (there is a strong connection here between these two having to do with rhythm and the kind of thing that goes on at the Cosmo on Saturday nights, but we all know that). If you were a little green alien (green, theoretically, because it is one of the few colors that humans don't come in as a rule), and were sitting above the planet with your little binoculars viewing all of the Earth's vastly different societies, you would probably see much less difference between them than we do down here. We all get married. We all get old. We all use mind-altering substances. We all shove bones and needles through our ears, noses, and lips, and we all make music.

The really interesting thing about music is its almost necessary indigenously-based popularity. With the advent of today's cross-culturally-communication-based entertainment scene, we, as Western bourgeois-minded consumers are treated to music from anywhere and everywhere, including strange and often irritating mixtures of the same (where else in the world can a band be described as "a kind of jazz-blues-funk-calypto fusion thing with a background in post-romantic-psychadellc-speed-core-Beatles, and an underlying tone of sixties-pre-rap dance-hall punk"?). While the question of whether or not there is any indigenous music left in the world (this is, of course, an ethno-centric blindness) can be a valid one, there is also the argument that music simply changes and does not lose locality in the process. Take Fredericton for example. It seems as though the music that is often considered to be "indigenous" to this part of the world (i.e. the reels and jigs of a Cape Breton fiddle group or the whining strains of a massed pipe and drum corps) is in fact based, and completely indicative of, an area that lies something like three thousand miles to the east of here, that is Scotland. However, the music of the Cape Breton highlands or even the North Shore of New Brunswick have their own, very distinctive sound. We, as a city, seem to have a love for the Blues (shown in the popularity of local groups like The Downtown Blues Band and others), yet this is Black music from the far Southern U.S. and

claims a local heritage of its own from there. One will not, however, find anyone on a front porch in Alabama strumming a guitar and muttering the words to "The N.B. Power Blues" or any such thing.

Bananas (Just wanted to see if you all are still with me here).

Of course the ultimate amalgamation of any and all possible styles comes in one main form, namely jazz. A medium Phillip Glass to Glass Tiger, if the musician wants to say anything and all possible forms of music humans can produce, jazz evolves along with everything else, but never is accused of being indicative or culturally biased or imported.

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