

ARTS

Spinal Tap strikes again

BY MICHAEL GRAHAM

SPINAL TAP IS BACK! The band that transcends metal myth. The band who brought us such rock anthems as "Big Bottom" and "Hell Hole". The band that gets lost backstage and stuffs their trousers with cucumbers have returned!

"RELEASE" PARTY Spinal Tap Break Like the Wind

It has been eight years since *This is Spinal Tap* was released. In the intervening years the band toured Japan, lost a drummer and split up. Then their former manager, Ian Faith, bit the big one. There had been bad blood between Faith and the band and in a recent interview Derek Smalls remembered him... "He took everything personally—including the royalties."

Rumours had been flying around for months about a Spinal Tap reunion. The rumours grew and grew and finally the band announced that they were indeed regrouping. The culmination of this comeback was realised last week, at the Double Deuce Road House, where a *Break Like the Wind* "release" party was held by Dead Faith/MCA records.

The event was a great success and, in keeping with Spinal Tap tradition, there was a small turnout, but unfortunately, no puppet show. The Double Deuce Road House was a fine venue (great fish and chips) and hostess/MCA rep. Krista Olmstead did a fine job of giving away free beer tickets, introducing the new video and drawing for prizes.

I was dubious about this new Tap release. How could it possibly live up to all of their legendary albums such as *Brainhammer*, *Blood To Let*, *Nerve Damage*, *Intravenous Demilo*, *Bent For The Rent* and, of course, *Smell The Glove* (all of these are oddly unavailable — I am thinking box set).

Everyone was treated to a tantalizing listen of the new album. Richard Shrimpton's presence on the cursed Spinal Tap drumkit was very impressive (his twin brother Mick, the previous Spinal Tap drummer, had spontaneously combusted during Tap's tour of Japan). In the fall, the band had put an ad in the paper for a new drummer which read "Drummer died. Need new one with no immediate family." Richard is a brave man.

It was obvious that the founding members (Derek Smalls, David St. Hubbins and Nigel Tufnel) had matured as musicians. Smalls' driving bass, St. Hubbins' tasteful rhythm

guitar work and of course Tufnel's expressive solos all came across in the more intense songs such as "Break Like the Wind", "Bitch School", and "Christmas with the Devil" to name but a few. In addition to these three virtuosos, *Break Like the Wind* also features Slash, Joe Satriani and Jeff Beck.

As the CD played, however, the diversity of the new material came through. The band paid some homage to their past with a rockabilly tune, a beatlesque song, and great hard rock. Although we only heard portions of the songs, I sensed, in "Just Begin Again" (featuring Cher), a lot of genuine emotion and sensitivity. This album is destined to become a classic — ranking up there with *Led Zeppelin IV*, *Physical Graffiti*, *Dark Side of the Moon* and *Sgt. Pepper*.

(In all seriousness, If you liked the "Black" album then you will like this one—the liner notes alone are worth the price).

After listening to snippets of the new CD, the video for "Bitch School" was played. This song has been misinterpreted by everyone — including the video director who thought that it needed a sex(ist) theme. Nigel Tufnel, in the official press release, explains the true meaning, "...if

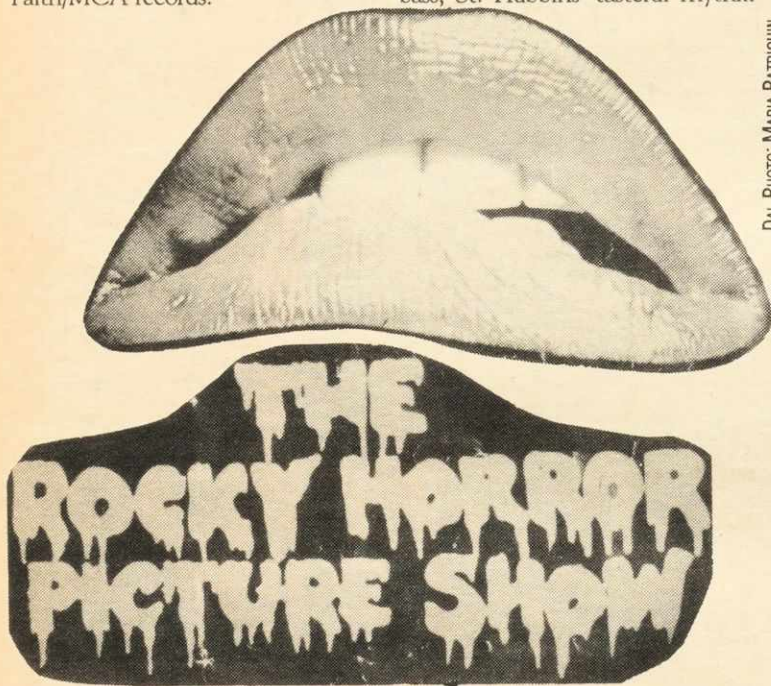


you listen, you'll hear what it really is. It's about dogs — about training dogs! The three of us love dogs. Read the lyrics — 'You're so fetching when you are down on all fours.' How can you misconstrue that?"

Topping off the evening was the critically acclaimed film *This is Spinal Tap*. This is the mother of all rockumentaries. It chronicles the band's disastrous American *Smell the Glove* tour. Quintessential viewing

from the quintessential rock band.

Derek Smalls: "People ask us 'why did you come back?' and one of the reasons, aside from trying to inflate our wallets a bit, is to try and make a statement about music. We're not heavy metal or light metal, we're not thrash or industrial or post-this or pre-that or punk-this or that. What we are making is a stand for good old generic rock."



DAL PHOTO: MARIA PATRIQUIN

BY MARIA PATRIQUIN

WHAT ARE YOU DOING this April Fool's Day? It's no joke! Dal Photo and Youth Challenge International will be presenting the Rocky Horror Picture Show in support of both of their causes on April 1 in the McInnes Room at 10 p.m.

FILM & FUNDRAISER Rocky Horror Picture Show McInnes Rm., April 1

on community, scientific and medical development in developing countries and in remote areas of the world.

This August to November, eight Nova Scotians along with 43 other Canadians will be working on several projects in Guyana, South America. In order to make this all possible each participant must raise \$3 000.

Two of the Dalhousie participants, Bruce Homer and Maria Patriquin will be holding the Rocky Horror fundraiser so take a little break from studying and bring all your friends out to support a good cause.

Your support in this and the fundraisers of the other challengers, Maria Wesolkowska, Hope Moore, Rebecca Staunton, Stephen Creaser, Hilary Sears and Jason Dodwell will be greatly appreciated.

Youth Challenge International is a non-profit, Canadian-based voluntary work service program that is partly sponsored by CIDA. It focuses

Together we can stop the Power of One

BY JENNIFER BECK

THE POWER OF ONE has everything you've ever wanted in a movie. It also has everything you've ever seen in a movie, and everything you've come to expect.

THEATRE The Power of One Park Lane

This exceedingly sentimental journey through South Africa in the 'forties is based on a book written by one Bryce Courtenay. The book is listed as being "semi-autobiographical," and one could only hope so. The odyssey begins with the birth of PK, and ends with his decision at age eighteen to forego the lure of Oxford College in favour of teaching English to black township residents. In the interim, everyone and everything he cares for dies or deserts him.

This is tragic, yes; but it eventually becomes such a repetitive recital of misery that even the softest hearts grow impatient. PK's father dies three days before PK is born. His mother suffers a nervous breakdown and sends PK to a boarding school, which is ordinarily just fascist but which (upon his untimely arrival as a British citizen) takes up Naziism. His Nazi classmates murder his pet chicken. His mother dies.

PK is then separated from his loving nurse and sent to live with Doc, a friend of his grandfather. Doc is a visiting German who cannot return home due to the war. Unfortunately,

he neglects to register as an alien and is interred in a concentration camp.

PK goes to the camp-cum-prison every day, and is taught to box (!) by an old black inmate called Geel Piet. This man is degraded and assaulted and ultimately beaten to death by a guard. The war ends, and Doc leaves PK to his own devices.

The Power Of One has a range of themes that would be familiar to even the most distracted audience. PK is told by Geel Piet that he is the "Rainmaker," the one person who can unite the tribes of Africa harmoniously. Time and again PK angrily denies the myth — I wonder what happens? PK becomes the boxing champion of his school, then decides to work professionally — gosh, will he win or lose? PK falls in love with Maria, a naive girl whose Boer father refuses to allow the two to see each other — just to give you a hint on this one, it comes complete with a balcony scene, including a Hollywood-convenient trellis. The bad guys meet justice (of a sort), and the brutality swirls in a triumphant crescendo to an unlikely conclusion. All this, set exploitatively against the beautiful (if seemingly incidental) African landscape.

If you have any association with this movie at all, don't eat anything beforehand. As one theatergoer opined, "The sight of a Britisher teaching South Africans to recite the American Bill of Rights just turned my stomach." And if that doesn't get you, the violence will.