

The game is over

The decline and fall of Esmonde McInnes

Copyright 1973 by Warren Clements
To: The Canadian Archives, Ottawa
From: Leonard Backbite, music agent

Dear Sir,

Further to our conversation, I am enclosing my personal file on the late Esmonde McInnes, Canadian rock star supreme. As his former agent and friend, I thank you on his behalf for the opportunity to place his clippings in the Archive Hall of Fame.

By the way, I thought you might also include the little blurb on the Biscuits enclosed in this envelope. I know it's not part of the McInnes file, but I'm currently managing the group, and I thought, well, who would it hurt? I know they'd really dig it.

And if you ever hear any records you'd like for your personal collection, just slip me a note and I'll ship them right over. No point in telling the top brass, though, they might not understand...

(liner notes from the album McInnes: The Early Years)

"Who would have thought, back in 1958, that the freckle-faced Ontario teen-ager singing North Superior Maple for Grant Vernon and his Oakville Aces would, a mere 15 years later, be an international pop idol?"

AIX-EN-PAYNES - (UPI) — This tiny French hamlet has been plagued with a series of rock festivals this summer, climaxing in the disastrous Werknot Fete-de-Moutarde, in which 40,000 free hot dogs were airlifted to a crowd of 18,000 starving teenyboppers.

As 15 bands fought through a 48-hour non-stop jam of old rock 'n' roll favourites, five teenies ate themselves to death and two others were rushed to the area clinic for removal of digested plastic wrappers and labels.

One of the bands at the site was Des McInnes' Spontaneous Combustion, an acid rock group which made headlines recently with their arrests on charges of "lewd and licentious behaviour". McInnes remarked at that time that "there isn't a word of truth in the charge, and you can ask the 15 girls who were with us in the room."

Sadly, the Combustion's act was a disappointment. McInnes played a solo riff on the electric guitar with his ears, but the results failed to impress a jaded crowd of teenyboppers who had seen the same act by five other guitarists.

"If we wanted to see wild gyrations and acts of insane contortion," remarked one young spectator, "we'd ride the Paris metro during the rush hour."

(UPI) Esmonde McInnes has run afoul of the United States Federal Communications Commission with the release of his latest single, Hooray for Marijuana.

In the song, which made rock headlines because of a guest appearance by marimba giant Dobbin Andrews, the refrain "hooray for marijuana" is repeated 22 times.

"I can't say positively at this time," said an FCC official, "but this song may fall under our ban on songs promoting or glorifying the use of drugs."

Told that a radio station in which McInnes owns part interest may lose its licence, McInnes replied, "That's okay, we don't have a licence anyway."

(excerpt from Rocksoff, the local trade paper) Locks from the head of pop singer Esmonde ("Cancer") McInnes went on sale today at record shops across the country.

The hair, enclosed in fireproof packets, is included with every 20th copy of McInnes' latest record album, Smile in the Subway.

Young teenyboppers have crowded the store buying album after album in a fruitless search for snippets of the rock idol's thatch.

"I've been here since the store opened," sighed one young fan, Goldie Higgins of Park Drive, "but so far all I've wound up with is 35 albums and no hair. I thought I caught a glimpse of dandruff on one jacket, but it was just a printing error."

Arnold P. Arnold, owner of APA's record store, smiled enigmatically when asked how many albums in his shipment contained the elusive samples.

"McInnes is still walking the streets with a full head of hair," he shrugged, "and it's a cinch that if any albums contain even a strand, the publicity office of the recording company will ship them out to radio stations and rock critics as a gimmick."

"But it sure sells a mess o' records."



Graphics by Lynn Tranter

(from Variety)

A rock opera based on the life of Winnie-the-Pooh has been unveiled by the authors of stage and screen hit, Budding Buddha. Winnie will be played by 18-year old child actress Melinda Leitch, last seen in the underground classic, Bite off My Walnuts.

"It's going to be something of a change of pace," said the demure Melinda (see this month's article in Man). "I get to wear a suit this time."

She denied a romantic link with singer Cancer McInnes, author of Pumpkin Shoot, a whodunit based on Mother Goose McInnes has also been offered the starring role in a film version of Bartlett's Familiar Quotations, but has reportedly turned it down, saying the part was rather dry.

(CP) Rising young pop singer Cancer McInnes has been signed to play the role of Christopher Robin in a new version of Winnie-the-Pooh, it was learned yesterday.

The 34-year old singer, whose recent album, Shot in the Dark, sold two million copies in Canada alone, said he had been chosen because of his "innate grace and superhuman charm".

"They wanted a man who could master the subtle innuendos of the Christopher Robin character, without upstaging Pooh," he explained.

McInnes was asked about rumours linking him romantically with Winnie's lead actress, Melinda Leitch.

"She's good in bed," replied McInnes. "That's all I can say at the moment."

(AP) Panic swept the big top last night as lions, baboons and elephants sprang from their cages onto an unsuspecting audience.

Two riot squads and three trainers brought the situation under control within an hour, but many patrons of the Hell's Bells Circus were afraid to walk home, and spent the night in the tent.

The animals' release was engineered by a garishly dressed man, who swung from the audience onto the caravan in the centre ring and

unlocked all the gates.

Singer Cancer McInnes, a Canadian pop recording artist, has been charged with public mischief and dangerous conduct, and is free on \$1,000 bail.

Balthazar Maracas, owner of the circus, swore revenge on the singer. "If I ever catch that serpent in a dark alley," he said, "only one of us will come out."

McInnes, who termed the incident "a blow for pop anarchy", has shrugged off Maracas' threat as "the crank gabble of a humourless man."

(Special to the Star) "Millions of years ago, when the earth was forming, hundreds of gaseous substances escaped from the earth's crust and rose into the sky to form what we now know as air."

Kris Green, TV's scientist Mr. Magic, waved his hand vaguely toward the stage above his low platform. "And now, boys and girls, we're lucky to have one of those gases with us tonight. Let's really give a big hand to Mr. Nitrogen!"

Pop singer Esmonde McInnes, dressed in a black cloak with fluorescent white make-up and a green walking stick, descended onto the stage on an elaborate pulley system. He spat imperiously into the audience.

"North Superior maple," he chanted, "turnin' over a new leaf..."

(New York Times) A cartoon series featuring animated characters based on pop singer Cancer McInnes and four members of his group was cancelled today, following the third day of picketing outside the production studio by 200 irate toddlers.

The tots, shouting angry slogans like "Finish McInnes" and "Cancer can be beaten", hanged a playdough effigy of McInnes with a skipping rope from a nearby fire hydrant.

"We know when we're licked," sighed Mel Waltz, producer of the offending show, Junior Rock. "Seems the kids have more taste than we thought."

The show has been widely panned by critics, who termed it "obscenity disguised as

mediocrity", "the worst exercise in tedium since the last National Film Board special on the alligators of Peru", and "the best postwar excuse for euthanasia for artists."

In the wake of the cancellation, Sesame Street has called off plans to devote a special programme to McInnes' teaching youngsters how to cut a hit record.

"Five muppets threatened to resign in protest," explained a Sesame spokesman, "and half the letters in the alphabet said they would call in sick."

(Ballyhoo Citizen) Despite rains which flooded the Baha Maha Arena in Pokeyournosein, Mexico, singer Cancer McInnes wowed a near capacity crowd through four hours of hard rock and snappy patter.

The highlight of the set was a guest appearance by the Biscuits, a 1950s soul group.

"We've been out of circulation for a while," said Tom Bestoluk, leader of the group. "Madge had a baby, and I guess you heard about that parking ticket in Saskatoon. Well, my arm's been acting up for some time too, so I went into the hospital to take a look at it."

"John got married a year ago to Mabel Pervin. Don't know whether you remember Mabel, she used to attend all our concerts, wore a big red T-shirt and brown slacks. Sure was quite a gal. But I guess your readers wouldn't be interested in all this."

(UPI) Cancer McInnes denied in court yesterday that he had introduced subliminal messages into the minds of young teenyboppers at his recent concert at the St. Patrick Arena in Levittown.

The charge, laid by the parents of young Goldie Higgins, alleged that by raising his decibel level past the legal limit, McInnes had caused 500 girls in the audience to strip off their clothes and run laughing onto the stage join the singer.

McInnes denied putting the words, "You are under my power," "look closely into the strobe light", and "you will remember none of this when I snap my fingers" into his new song, Run, Go Naked.

"I was just ad-libbing," he said. "Who knows what I said? The girls were just turned on by my animal magnetism."

He was asked by the prosecution whether or not he had actually snapped his fingers onstage, and McInnes admitted he had. "But it was just a little snap," he added. "Like this."

Court officials restrained Miss Higgins and 14 other teenyboppers present from staging a public disturbance in the room.

(Napanee Beaver) Five large bears waddled onstage last night at the Symptom of Science arena, and pounded the piss out of featured performer Cancer McInnes, well-known pop idol.

Fans cheered, and rock critics hailed the act as one of the most imaginative since Alice Cooper staged a fake hanging at the end of an onstage gang rumble.

"Pure genius," breathed Mercury critic Fran Sifton.

"It must have taken years of training," gushed Venus critic Harold Willis.

McInnes' manager Lennie Backbite revealed backstage, however, that the sudden beating was totally unplanned, and was the work of "a crazed lunatic".

Balthazar Maracas, owner of the Hell's Bells Circus, currently touring Napanee, has been charged with attempted murder.

McInnes is listed in critical condition at Mercy Hospital, with many internal injuries. Rock critics are reporting on his recovery.

"Fair," writes Fran Sifton, "but I've seen better."

"If I were the nursing staff, I would demand my money back," writes Harold Willis. "A total waste of time and effort."

(from Time Magazine)

DIED: Cancer McInnes, 38, of wounds received at the hands of admiring fans, who located the operating room housing their ailing idol and proceeded to steal momentos of the delicate operation, including sponges, sutures and oxygen tanks. McInnes, who had been planning to make a North American tour, was recovering from wounds received during a recent stage show. His last moments were caught on tape by visiting rock impresario Arnold P. Arnold, who muttered something about "finally having a deal nobody will refuse". (see MUSIC) Cremation services to be held in Los Angeles, with the ashes scattered to local record stores at \$5.98 an ash.