

arts & entertainment

I still had the arcade. That was basically the trade that we made. So I thought that I'd have an income and be able to sit that period out and then maybe do something again after that.

LF: So you picked up the Double Deuce... how long have you had that?

GC: Since March of '92.

LF: Concerning the location, it's right across the street from the Flamingo. Was it a conscious decision to go there? Did it matter about the location?

always thought that the Seahorse was a great bar, but people just like to have choices. So being between there and the Flamingo was a good place to be but it wasn't a conscious thing. Maybe it was fate.

LF: Will the Flamingo be missed at all?

GC: I don't think that another club like the Double Deuce could exist. There couldn't be two of us. We would end up just beating

at the Double Deuce are guitar-driven bands... I just remember back in '87 things were a bit more diverse as far as sounds were concerned.

GC: Bands like Sebastopol, the Misery Goats?

LF: Yeah, those ones on *Out Of The Fog*.

GC: There were a lot of hardcore bands. That was what was prominent during the period of the Flamingo on Gottingen Street, 'cause after *Out Of The Fog* came out, almost all of those bands either left town or disintegrated, so we were left with pretty much just hardcore.

Now I think it's pretty diverse. Keyboards are definitely pretty few and far between here, which I think can be a good thing unless you really know how to use it. There's not a lot of bands using sampling. I think there's a certain scene that I'm finding is most popular with the audience that I have to be aware of. It's my job to put as many people as possible into the club when it comes right down to it.

The scene that is getting all the publicity could be labelled as "grunge", but I think there is a lot of diversity with the bands that are being talked about. Leonard Conan, or Horseshoes and Handgrenades are different sounding than anybody, then there's the progressive bunch of bands... Spine are different. I think that they all find their own sound and it's natural that people are gonna be influenced by the bands that they're seeing.

LF: The scene has gotten so much attention over the past six weeks? A month? A year? Does it have a flavor of the month quality to you?

GC: Well, it's the flavor of the year now because it has really been a year. And it has built to a certain extent in the past little while. I mean none of us are really taking it very seriously. You take a trip down to New York, and it's easy to realize that the music industry as a whole is huge -- there's a lot of scenes being written about.

To me, a lot of things got proven during the Pop Explosion. Our bands held up well against some of the bands we brought in. There was a lot of industry people there, some people from the States, and the bands that were up that had never been here before, a lot of them hadn't even heard about the Halifax hype, so that shows you how far things go, but they really liked it here, they thought our bands were really good, they liked the audience, they did like the city.

Halifax is a nice city. How hip it is depends on where you go. You can find some pretty unhip places. Some people get out of hand totally. This whole "new

Seattle" thing has gotta stop. That's just a little bit on the absurd side. Seattle is how much bigger than Halifax? It's huge. If you look at it population base, per capita, how many bands we've got here, how many good bands, that we probably might be better, 'cause I think there are good things to being in a small city. Everybody does tend to know everybody a bit more. I think there's some positive things that can come out of that.

LF: Is there better support?

GC: Yeah. We don't have as many bands coming through from out of town, so maybe there is a little bit more support for local bands, because they get to play more on prime nights as headliners and build the audience up. It may be easier here in a lot of ways, especially now that when you leave Halifax and go on tour, at least certainly in Canada, people are going to pick up and take notice that it's from Halifax, even if it's just to slag it, like the Toronto media; there's definitely a Halifax backlash happening. I think there's a little bit of the attitude that the whole thing has been totally overblown. Which of course is probably true. But they shouldn't let it colour their opinions of the bands that go and play. Sometimes they do.

LF: Where they come from doesn't matter.

GC: Yeah... Now the record industry is going out and looking for bands in smaller centers like this, and that's making it so that people don't have to gravitate as much to those big places, and that's good I think. Too much power in any one place is not very good.

LF: Now you've got all the power.

GC: In Halifax? Not at all. I mean, it may have been true at one point that the Flamingo had all the power, but that was only in a very limited way, and that

was in the live aspect, and that's always consciously what I've tried to do.

In the past there was never people doing things for the bands in other capacities. There was never Cinnamon Toast records, there

was never recording studios around like Terry's (Terry Pulliam's Soundmarket) and Adinsound, and what Doug (Barron, Deep Recording Space Nine) is doing here and what Peter Rowan has always been doing here. Peter has been the biggest supporter of the alternative bands through the years.

Maybe there is a certain amount of power, because there's not a lot of places that are going to want to book the kind

of things that I do, but now there's all those people working in different capacities as management and stuff. I've never really tried to hold control over things. I don't really think it's good. Not that I want another club like me to

open up around the corner. Then I would obviously put them out of business (laughs).

LF: Do you think the Halifax thing can be sustained?

GC: There's two parts of it. There's

the bands, and the audience. Not that I think it's going to happen, but if suddenly three or four of the bands that I depend on a lot might break up, and I wasn't bringing in enough out-of-town bands to keep it interesting for the audience and for the other bands, then I think it could die pretty quickly. But that's why I think it's important to keep bringing in the other acts, because sometimes you're going to go through those periods.

The attention's going to pass, definitely, but the point is, how is Halifax going to be known then? It's going to be known as a city that's a cool place to go to, that a band from out of town can come here and get a good gig, and that there's good bands from there. We're a little bit more on the map.

LF: Why are you in this business?

GC: Because it's fun. There's only so many things that each of us can do that they're really going to like. So I think I'm lucky; maybe I'm not making a huge amount of money but I like it. I've always liked the live aspect and the audience, entertaining the audiences. The part that I haven't enjoyed a lot is the stress of the financial burdens that come with this business, that's no fun. And this club, though, has got the least of those, so I can enjoy it a little bit more. Not that we're getting rich, but it doesn't show signs that we're going to go under. So I enjoy doing this kind of thing. It's fun. I get to drink on the job.

LF: Wish I could say the same (laughter). Is there going to be another Halifax Pop Explosion next year?

GC: Oh yeah, definitely. Maybe a tent on the waterfront and the Deuce, so we'll do some shows down there. The Buskers did that tent down on the waterfront and I'd love to do something like that so we could bring in some other bands. There might be bigger acts available to us next year...

LF: Any names yet or is that too far off?

GC: Yeah, it's too far off. (Laughs) Sonic Youth? That would be good. The Breeders? That would be good.

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DALPHOTO: MICHAEL GRAHAM

GC: Well, in between the Flamingo, Waldo's happened too, and that wasn't a highly successful venture on my part. After that was closed, I wanted another stage, another bar to work with. I wanted to do live music at a good level so it would have to have a decent stage and be not doing very well for them to be interested in the ideas that I would have. It didn't have to be say on Argyle Street, it just had to be within a certain area. The fact that it was right around the corner from the Flamingo was not a positive or a negative thing. I think I was thinking more about that I didn't want to be too far away from the Seahorse. I've

each other over the head.

There's not going to be reggae coming in, there's not going to be any blues stuff, and there's some things that are maybe in between that are closer to alternative but maybe just not quite what I would like to do that we are not going to see until something else comes along. So I don't think it's going to give me more chances of bands. I have too many bands wanting to play at the club as it is, and I'm trying to keep a mix of local and out-of-town and be as fair about the gigs as possible.

LF: Is there much distinction in the bands in Halifax right now? What I see

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TO BE OR NOT TO BE... IS STILL THE QUESTION

News from the front: The Dalhousie Art Gallery's Director, Mern O'Brien, has presented our strategic financial plan (including the generous Alumni donation) to members of the Administration, including Vice President (Finance) Bryan Mason, and Vice President (Academic) Deborah Hobson. Our plan now has to be considered by Dr. Clark and approved by the Board of Governors. We also await word from Senate. We hope to have further news for the next issue of the *Gazette*. In the meantime...

Come and view the **40th Annual Dalhousie Student, Staff, Faculty and Alumni Exhibition**, which remains open until Sunday, December 19th. (Participants, please pick up your works on the 20th, 21st or 22nd, or after the December break.) In the New Year, please join us at 8 pm on Thursday, 13 January, 1994, for the opening of **Uses of the Vernacular in Contemporary Nova Scotian Art**, a vibrant and colourful exhibition featuring contemporary Nova Scotian artists who employ folk art idioms. The Art Gallery is located on the lower level of the Dalhousie Arts Centre (the "Cohn"), and we are open Tuesday - Friday, 11 am - 5 pm, and weekends, 1 pm - 5 pm, late night Tuesday, 7 pm - 10 pm. We also show free films/videos on Wednesdays. Telephone: 494-2403.

The Dalhousie Art Gallery

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