

Quickstep: exciting rock and roll

By JOEY KILFOIL

In a musical world where the economy of the day often demands blatant commercialism, finding a band with any kind of originality can be a difficult task. It is harder still to find one that is not only different, but displays good musicianship and has an exciting visual presentation. Quickstep, the Montreal band that wraps up a week-long engagement here tomorrow night, attains these goals admirably.

This five-man band, formerly called Virginia Quickstep, is an original in the truest sense of the word: it is hard to say who it is they sound like. The music is high-quality, danceable rock and roll. It has a new-wave edge in many places, but the original material shows a lot of respect for the 'old' progressions and classic songwriting styles. Although the originals can only be described as Quickstep music, a partial list of artists covered in-

cludes David Bowie, The Tubes, Billy Idol, Santana, and Genesis.

The focal point of the group is singer Terry Weir, whose occasional conga playing adds a Latin flavor to a few songs. Guitarist, and principal songwriter with Terry is Dino Pugliese, who supplies harmonies and sings lead vocal on a number of selections. On bass and backing vocals is Pat Donnelly, while Rami Homsy provides the solid yet imaginative drumming which ties the band's sound together. The newest member of the group is keyboardist Jordan Vogel, a Toronto native.

Perhaps the most immediately recognizable characteristic of Quickstep in live performance is their powerful stage presence. Pat's wireless transmitter allows him to run out into the audience and jump from table to table while still playing. Rami makes drumming look easy, twirling his sticks and tossing them in the air while never missing a beat. Terry is an entity unto himself; a collage of faces, acrobatics, and pantomimes, while Jordan and Dino's musical virtuosity provide tasteful flash.

Quickstep recorded a single in 1982 which was released early this year, mainly as a promotional tool. 'Last Chance' and 'She's on Fire' characterize as much as any two songs can--the Quickstep sound:

a solid rock beat with good melody and lyrics. Other originals include 'Body Harm,' 'Don't Say It's Over,' and 'You Must Be Leaving,' a song described by Terry as 'Quebec reggae.' 'Take my Love,' a beautiful ballad, was written and is sung by Dino.

Although the band has about 25 completed originals, they generally don't do more than six or seven in a single evening. The band notes that the Maritimes, and Fredericton in particular, is more open to new things and the audiences here are more receptive to original material. With the help of a four-track tape recorder, they have been using their

spare time while on the road to record a demo tape of original tunes. Band members say record companies are very interested but are anxious to hear more original material.

Quickstep gained some notoriety when they started playing a couple of years ago as a good Springsteen copy band. However, while they gained the respect of their audience for attempting something different, the material became dated. The natural evolution of their material led to the replacement of their saxophone player by a keyboardist, and the band now feels they have a sound which is uniquely theirs.

Fredericton has always been good to Quickstep and Terry is particularly looking forward to seeing the UNB and St. Thomas University crowd.

"University audiences are the best audiences to play for," says Terry. "They're more diverse and open minded. They go out to get rid of their frustrations and have a good time."

Quickstep plays tonight and tomorrow at the Rollin' Keg. Showtime is 8:30 p.m.

The Gospel According to Saint Pierre

Pierre Trudeau is my shepherd
I shall not want,
He leadeth me beside the still factories
and abandoned farms
He restoreth my doubt about the Liberal Party
And annoineth my wages with taxes
and inflation
...So my expenses runneth over my income.

Surely poverty and hard living shall follow the Liberal Party
and I shall work on a rented farm
and live in a rented house forever

Many ears ago, Moses said:
...pack up your shovel, pack up your camel, move your ass,
and I will lead you to the promised land.

5000 years later, Pearson said:
...Lay down your shovel, sit on your ass, light up a Camel,
this is the Promised Land

This year, Pierre Trudeau will take your shovel, sell your
camel, kick your ass and tell you he gave away the Promis-
ed Land.

I'm glad I am a Canadian
I am glad I am free
But I wish I was a dog
and Pierre Trudeau was a tree!

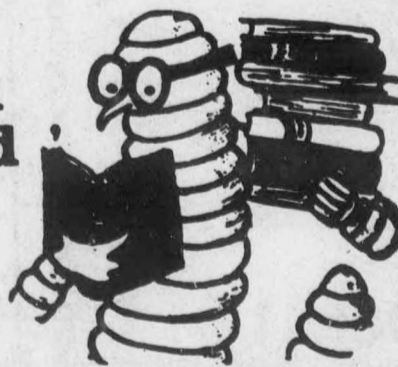
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