

# Cool Blue Coverage

## Live in Halifax

Predicts the future

Plumtree

Cinnamon Toast Records

Halifax's Plumtree is back with their sophomore release, *Predicts the Future*. The album contains 12 tracks prepared at Idea of East Studios (Sloan's *One Chord to Another*) by the girls and Laurence Currie.



Compared to 1996's *Mass Teen Fainting*, the new album features more developed drums and guitar. Most of the new songs are along the lines of Plumtree's trademark upbeat pop-style, with one or two mellow songs just for flavour. The first single from this album is "Scott Pilgrim", first released on a split 7" in 1996 with the Inbreds.

This album is the best effort from Plumtree thus far and shows promise for future albums. The album is scheduled for release on October 4th.

Plumtree will be touring across Canada with Thrush Hermit.

Plumtree plays the Halifax On Music Festival on September 27th at Cafe Ole.

STEVE PETRIE

Other Songs

Ron Sexsmith  
Interscope



I must admit that I hated this CD when I first played it. I had heard about Ron Sexsmith, but had not heard any of his music. Whatever I was expecting, it was not the simple man-and-his-guitar sound that emanated from my speakers. Maybe I am just too spoiled by pop hooks and rock riffs that cater to the masses that

BY AMBER MACARTHUR

Cool Blue Halo. If you saw Big Sugar in concert this September at Dalhousie, you know this band. If you follow local music, you know this band. If you relied on the Big Sugar concert coverage in the Gazette for Cool Blue Halo knowledge, you are pretty much left in the dark. Hopefully it's not too late to educate the latter group and let them know what they have been missing.

Before this past weekend I fell into the group that knew of Cool Blue Halo. I had heard their most popular song, "Too Much Kathleen", and had seen the video on Muchmusic. It was disappointing picking up the Gazette and reading an entire article on Big Sugar, as though they don't receive enough coverage already. I took it upon myself to see Cool Blue Halo perform, and give you a chance to read what they are all about.

On Saturday night Cool Blue Halo played a gig at The Oasis before a relatively small number of

this just went right over my head.

Upon subsequent listenings, I began to appreciate the more subtle aspects of the album. The solid songcraft shone through as I tried to pick holes in the album and found that I could not. The songs are slice of life stories told by a seasoned observer of the human condition.

Once you give yourself up to the music there are several little gems of wisdom to be found. In "Thinly Veiled Disguise", he describes how "Under every sky of baby blue/ Is an undercurrent of rain/ Under every trial life puts you through/ Is an undercurrent of change."

The music is all written by Sexsmith and simply arranged and performed by himself and a small group of musicians. You feel like you should be sitting in some dark empty bar listening to him sing over a cold beer. It is very relaxed, with tinges of folk and country music laced throughout.

It took some work to get into this album, but for anyone who likes plain, simple, and good songs, I invite them to take the challenge and work their way into this CD.

NEIL FRASER

dedicated fans. In the dimly-lit smoke-filled room it was hard to say how the night and this article would turn out. I began to think that maybe there was a reason they were



Photo by Ian MacAskill.

two songs they just let loose. Each member of the band gave new meaning to the word heart as they belted out tune after tune. After this first set no one in the crowd left their seats, except for the purpose of obtaining the necessities, as we anxiously awaited the band's return.

During both the first and second set they played all their own music, except for a couple of requested Beatles songs. Despite the make shift dance floor, there was plenty of dancing going on. We non-dancers sat happily in our seats consuming beers as quickly as the band drank their signature brand — Moose green.

Two o'clock was approaching and the music had to come to an end, but not before an encore. By the end of the performance there was a constant buzz in the air as the once lifeless crowd stirred up some noise. The energy in the room was indication enough that this crowd would be back to see Cool Blue Halo.

Cool Blue Halo is performing as part of the Halifax On Music Festival on September 27th at the Blues Corner.

## RAFA to showcase

From September 24th to 28th, Rock Artists For Artists (RAFA) will stage various concerts throughout downtown Halifax.

The not-for-profit group, which aims to promote artists who write, record, and perform pop/rock songs, is organizing the showcase as part of Nova Scotia Music Week.

This isn't light fare, either. Local favourites such as PF Station, Julia's Rain and Madhat will be

performing at several metro venues, including the New Palace and the Oasis.

Along the way, RAFA will hold seminars for aspiring artists, as well as song critique sessions with industry insiders.

The grand finale, set for Sunday at Cheers, features twelve bands.

Admission for each show is \$2.

Check the "Live in Halifax" segment for artists and locales.

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