

Thrush Hermit and the Grifters

Local boys Thrush Hermit made their On Music appearance Friday night at the Reflections Cabaret. The

energy set, filled with monster guitar riffs and crunching chords. Their blend of Kiss like music with pop vocals is always geared to be a crowd pleaser, and Friday was no exception.



Joel Plaskett of Thrush Hermit. photo by Shannon Rafferty

set started with a bluesy tune relatively new to their play list, but they soon launched into some favourites from *Sweet Homewrecker* and their previous two EPs.

Being a big fan of the band, I had gone to Reflections expecting a great show, but left a little dissatisfied. I've seen their act about a dozen times in the last few years, and other than their song-writing and musicianship improving substantially, not much has changed since 1993. I had hoped to hear something different from what I already own, but left having experienced what I could have got in the comfort of my living room, only louder and with crowds.

Thrush Hermit are embarking on a cross-Canada tour that will take them through 30 shows in roughly 40 days. "We're playing in all sorts

of tiny places, like Lethbridge and Peterborough" said guitarist/vocalist Joel Plaskett.

The band will be joined by Plumtree on the Western leg of the tour, as well as the Mini-Pops. It'll be a kind of travelling circus" said Plaskett.

The tour is in support of their latest full length release, *Sweet Homewrecker*. That album was also released in the U.S.

"There really wasn't a lot of fanfare... it really is tough, touring in the States, unless you're opening for someone" said Plaskett.

Thrush Hermit plans to start working on some new demos when they return to Halifax, in preparation for a new release that could be released as early as next summer.

The Grifters followed Thrush Hermit on the bill. These guys were supposed to be the main attraction of the evening. Their music has been hailed as "rock fused with some down-home Memphis soul." I think it's time they hire a new P.R. flak.

The music was bland, forgettable, mid-tempo noise. I left halfway through the set. Memphis soul? Nowhere to be seen. The band's stage presence did bring to mind one famous Memphis resident — Elvis. That is to say bloated, decadent, and dead.

MARK REYNOLDS



Elevator ride

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part of their encore. So while making *Eerieconsilation*, they kept in mind that they would be playing these songs live, and tried to keep it at just bass, drums, and guitar.

Although Elevator to Hell performed every song as close to the album version as possible, by the end of the show I realized that if you like Elevator to Hell, you've got to see them live to hear them at their fullest potential. The bass was turned way up; it was driving and smooth, in a way you could never experience just by listening to the albums. Lead vocalist Rick White's simple dreamy guitar solos took you with them on every note. It was obvious that they were enjoying themselves. Rick and Tara swayed their upper bodies simultaneously to the music, their long, dark hair swinging.

Their sound is hard to describe: The softer songs are flowing and dreamy with a really good beat, while the heavy songs are either slow and powerful, or fast and a little bit poppy. Their music creates a relaxed, calm mood in the listener, which Tara said is not intentionally done.

"We're not conscious of it, but a lot of people have told us that," she said. All of their songs are quite short, with most being about two minutes long, the longer ones being three, and the longest being four.

"It's better to leave people wanting more than to bore them," Tara said of the length of their songs.

Elevator to Hell (based in Moncton, N.B.) consists of Rick White (guitar, voice, and keyboards), Tara White (bass), and Mark Gaudet (drums). Rick and Mark are formerly of the band Eric's Trip. Elevator to Hell was started as "Rick's solo outlet" for

songs he felt didn't fit Eric's Trip style. Later he decided Elevator to Hell would be better as a band, and here they are.

When asked if Tara White thought any of Elevator's success was due to Eric's Trip, she talked about the definite tie between them and Subpop, and how a lot of Eric's Trip fans are following them, as well as the other bands that came from members of Eric's Trip.

"But I don't know if we've really achieved success," she joked.

Their goal now is to keep going, keep releasing records, and make a bit of a living.

Do they want to be superstars? "I don't know...to get famous there's a lot of corruption with record labels and money and managers. We wouldn't want that. Maybe if we could somehow do it our way. It would be nice if all of a sudden we had bigger audiences..."

For now they're going to try to do a video for the new album and maybe do a little tour around Quebec.

"Touring can be slow in places, but Canada is good," said White. "In Montreal people receive us really well, and in Toronto too." She also said that they don't enjoy the travelling part of touring, saying that it gets monotonous, but they definitely enjoy playing.

Good news for Elevator to Hell fans: When asked how long they will last White answered, "We'll play it by ear and by fate. I hope quite a while. We have a lot we want to accomplish, a lot we want to create."

Also playing last Friday at Cafe Olé for Halifax On Music were Teen Wolf from Halifax, Red Pony from Ottawa, Tricky Woo from Montreal, and Moonsocket from Halifax.

ANGELA BELTAOS

Sound woes hinder Copyright

On Friday night, under the blue lights, the Blues Corner featured Copyright with several other bands as part of the Halifax On Music Festival, which took place over the course of the weekend. Copyright appeared as part of an ongoing fall tour promoting their new album *Love Story*. This album represents Copyright's second attempt at stardom, having been unfortunately unsuccessful with their virtually unknown previous album *Circle C* — a 1991 David Geffen release.

Blues Corner itself was fairly packed for the show: if you wanted a seat, you either had to be early or lucky. Otherwise most people settled for a limited amount of standing room. The show itself was rather brief due to delays in setting up.

They played four or five songs from *Love Story*, including "Seven" and the album's first single, "Transfiguration". Having heard the CD prior to seeing the show, I had mixed feelings about my

impression of the band. As some of you may have read last week, I thought that the first half of *Love Story* was promising but the latter half was somewhat disappointing. Still I kept an open mind, having seen bands perform before who sounded far better live than in recording.

Copyright played an impressive set. If you were up close near the stage, the band had great sound as they performed the better songs from their album. However, for those sitting further back, because of the acoustics of the Blues Corner, most of the music came out jumbled and the lyrics were practically incoherent. This was not at all the band's fault: a few problems with the speakers and the overall poor acoustics of Blues Corner made for, as the band put it "...a difficult night."

After the show was over I had a

chance to talk to Copyright. The group was disappointed with the show, and found the Blues Corner to be a difficult club to play.

They have had some decent venues on their tour, especially in Toronto, where they will be returning in late October. Having met with disappointment on their last album, Copyright definitely wants to promote *Love Story* as best as possible.

Though unsure about most things related to the band's future success, Copyright was confident about the originality of their sound. They do have a rather unique sound, which at its best is great to listen to.

Other bands on the bill were Neko Case (with Matt Murphy and his Ten Cent Wings), State Champs, and Syrup USA.

PATRICK SHAUNESSY

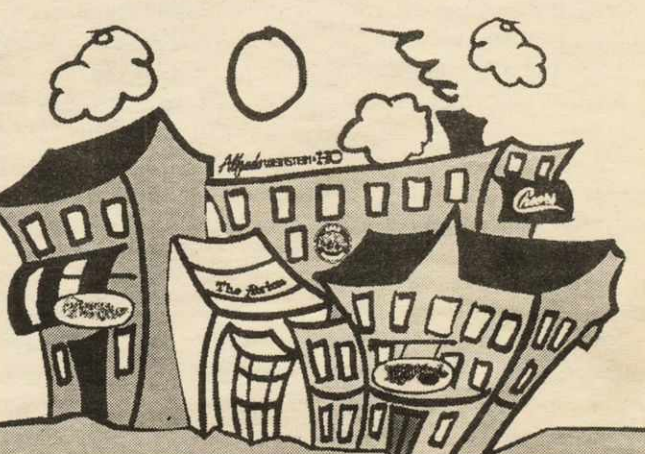
"If you wanted a seat, you either had to be early or lucky."

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