

Arts & Entertainment



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Left to right: Kelly Simpson of Cadillac of Worms, Bruce Thorson and Rob Westbury of the Colour 9; play for Rock Against Apartheid.

Rock Against Apartheid a consciousness raising gig

by Pam Hnytko and Rachel Sanders

The coordinators of Rock Against Apartheid II don't expect their fund raising concert, on November 25th and 26th, to free Nelson Mandela or to assist in the abolition of racism world-wide. More realistically, along with ten Alberta bands, they hope to contribute to Edmonton's growing awareness of the apartheid problem and to raise funds for anti-apartheid projects.

For the second consecutive year, CARA (Citizens Against Racism and Apartheid) is sponsoring a two-night concert at the Multipurpose Rumpusroom. Appearing will be one band from Calgary and nine from Edmonton who represent a wide variety of musical tastes including alternative, hardcore punk, reggae, and folk music.

The production manager, Todd Flintstone, prefers to use his pen name in connection with the concert because of problems he had with racists in his high school after last year's gig. Todd's problem this year, though, "is getting it all together without losing my mind." Coordinating meetings with CARA and rehearsals with the bands, as well as obtaining advertising and a sound system is a mind boggling job. However, as far as the cooperation of the volunteers goes, everyone is being "just swell". People donating their time and effort include the bands, the crew, and such advertising personnel as poster artists, CJSR, and *The Bullet*.

Last year's show sold out and this year's is expected to do the same. Twenty-five percent of the forecasted \$1200 profit will be kept by CARA for educational materials in the form of buttons, T-shirts, videos, and information and fact sheets. CARA will have a booth set up at the front entrance of the Rumpusroom during the concert and will be supplying literature and information about the anti-apartheid movement. The other seventy-five percent of the money earned will be going to an organization called SOMAFCO (Solomon Mahlangu Freedom College) which is established in Tanzania and works towards

the education of exiled black South Africans. "The basic philosophy behind SOMAFCO is once the apartheid regime is overthrown, or apartheid is abolished, they're going to need educated South Africans, and right now the only educated South Africans are white... the idea is to funnel money into channels that are working towards South Africa's future."

The bands all receive written statements that explain the breakdown of the profits. However, Kelly Simpson, from the band Cadillac of Worms, is more concerned with the educational aspect of the concert than with the fund raising. He expects the concert to assist in changing attitudes "not on an international level but certainly on an individual or personal level." His opinions were echoed by Rob Westbury and Bruce Thorson of The Colour 9 who believe that "any little bit that we can do helps."

The audience that the bands hope to reach is a diverse one, as Kelly puts it, "a large cross-section of students, political activists, people who just want to go for the music, people who have never been to a gig, my mom... Nelson Mandela's supposed to show up...!" Although some of the music may attract a certain crowd, much of the audience is expected to attend in support of the anti-apartheid cause.

The principle inherent in the concert is "instead of trying to change the world, clean up your own back yard." Bruce summed it up best, saying "if we can change one person's attitudes towards other races then we'll have achieved our purpose."

The goals of *Rock Against Apartheid II* are many. As Todd reaffirmed, "it helps the anti-apartheid movement, it helps educate people, it helps give money to a good cause, and it helps local bands get recognition and publicity." Approximately one hundred and fifty tickets are currently on sale downtown at Sound Connection. If the concert is as successful educationally and financially this year as it was last year, the coordinators plan to expand in the future. As Todd proclaimed vehemently, "We're gonna do Woodstock!"

Canada Music Week concerts

The U of A Department of Music is presenting several concerts as part of Canada Music Week Festivities. All events take place in Convocation Hall in the Old Arts Building, except where noted. Many concerts are free; those which are not are individually noted.

On Sunday, November 29, 8 pm, the Encounters series continues, featuring works by Barber and Ratcliffe, among others. Admission to this concert is \$3 for students, \$5 for adults. The U of A Composers' Concert, featuring works by several resident composers is on Wednesday, November 23 at 8 pm. On Friday, November 25, the Collegium Musicum will perform at 8 pm, directed by Marnie Giesbrecht. Admission is \$3 and \$5. On Sunday, November 27, at 3 pm, the Alto Nova Piano Trio, featuring Helmut Brauss, piano, Norman Nelson, violin and Tanya Prochazka, cello, will give a recital. At 8 pm on the same day, the U of A Concert Choir, directed by Bruce Wheatcroft will perform. Admission is \$3 and \$5.

There will also be free noon hour

concerts put on by students in the Department of Music, on Monday, November 21, in the stairwell of the Fine Arts Building. Liane Gaylen, flute and Sylvia Shaddick, piano will perform Kenins' Concertante, and Merrill Tanner, soprano and Carl Lotsberg, guitar, will perform "A Circle of Tears" by Ray Sealey of the University of Ottawa. On Wednesday, November 23, in room 1-29, Fine Arts Building, Barbara McKinley, mezzo-soprano, will perform "J'ai perdu mon amant," a French-Canadian folk song, Darlene Schubert and Jane O'Dea, sopranos, will perform a work by R. Murray Schafer, and Paul Polushin, bass and Corey Hamm, piano, will perform De Coursey's Four Miniatures for Bass.

Off campus, Alberta College presents a Student Concert at Buchanan Hall on Saturday, November 26 at 7:30 pm. On Sunday, November 27, 2 pm, Buchanan Hall, Alberta College presents a Chamber Music concert featuring all Canadian works. Admission to both of these concerts is free.

This Spirit looks unstoppable

interview by Ron Kuipers

That unstoppable river, Spirit of the West, will flow through Edmonton Friday night, and they are looking forward to it. The band is winding up an extensive tour with some Western Canadian dates.

Although their touring experience has taken them all across Canada and beyond, band member Geoffrey Kelly states that the band still feels a strong attachment to the west. He feels that there is a big difference between eastern and western Canada. "We seem to have a more original approach to things than Toronto bands," Kelly suggests. He also feels the west is "a little mellower than the hub of Toronto." Yet having toured eastern Canada, the band has grown to like it. "Halifax is one of our favorite places," Kelly says.

The band feels quite comfortable playing in Edmonton; their first appearance here was at Edmonton's folk music festival. Since then, the band's Edmonton following has continued to grow in size and type. "Edmonton is a great place to play," affirms Kelly. Their last two gigs here have been at Dinwoodie, and according to Kelly that has allowed them to reach a different crowd than they normally would at folk music festivals.

Still, the band doesn't just want to zero in on the university crowd. In the future they hope to do more afternoon gigs so they can play to every age group. But

Kelly maintains that young people are still a target for them. This is reflected in their production of a video for the song "Political" and another video about free trade with Paul Hyde of Payola fame. Claims Kelly, "With a video you can reach a much younger audience, and they can listen to a song that they normally wouldn't hear on the radio." Getting their message out to young people is something the band has always been excited about.

This brings us to Spirit of the West's "message". Although social issues are a big part of what this band is about, Kelly asserts that they are not a "cause band". "Once you come and see us live, you will discover otherwise. We balance everything with a lot of fun." With their second LP, *Tripping up the Stairs*, the band felt that the only songs that were getting recognition and airplay were the light and humorous songs such as "Honest Gamble" and "The Crawl". While this is still a valid dimension of the band, they were afraid the public wouldn't realize that "there was a whole different side to us." For that reason the most recent album *Labour Day* was much more sober. Kelly explains, "We were ready to make a serious album." The band remains politically active, however, as their gigs here include a benefit for the NDP.

Right now, the band is fooling around with some new songs and making a few demo tapes. Kelly feels that "the next



Spirit of the West, one of Edmonton's favourite live acts, returns for a show at Dinwoodie this Friday night.

album will be completely different" and that the balance of songs on it will be more akin to the balance of songs on *Tripping up the Stairs*. The band is also bringing in various session musicians such as Cat Hendrix, who will be doing some drumming on a few tracks. Actual drumming is a new approach for the band, and Kelly feels it will make some of their songs more full-sounding.

In their studio work, Spirit of the West

are bravely revealing with quite personal lyrics. According to Kelly, this personalism is necessary in order for the band to establish an intimate relationship with their audience. This personal aspect of the band will spill over onto their live show. Kelly explains, "After a concert, we like to feel that the audience has gotten to know us, and that we have gotten to know the audience." At this moment, there are many people in Edmonton looking forward to getting to know Spirit of the West.