

EDITORIAL

Scam! Scam! Scam!

By Kwame Dawes

In Paul Simon's new recording *The Rhythm of the Saints* he writes about the growing lack of integrity in the music industry. Simon's entire album challenges the dearth in artistic integrity apparent in much of the music business by dint of its ability to showcase the talents of a range of international musicians. Simon gives credit to his musicians. The list of credits stands in stark contrast to the list of musicians credited in the now infamous Milli Vanilli album "Girl You Know its True." These two fakes are finally getting their just deserts.

Their initial success should not come as a surprise to us. In fact, the entire fiasco is a testament to the possibilities that modern technology have introduced into the music business, and reflects yet another in the myriad cases of gross deception that the music industry has perpetrated. The question is, if we allow for the use of synthesizers which replicate the sound of horns, strings, choirs and every other kind of acoustic and electronic musical sound, and if we can have drum machines that allow drummers to play double beats when they have only played one, etc., what is stopping a singer from using the voices of other musicians and a studio with the capacity to make these voices sound like his/her own? The Milli Vanilli concerts are not simply feats in lip-synching. The vocals are digitally tuned to the instruments which are being played live so that changes in tempo are compensated for. This is high tech stuff and many musicians are using the same.

For instance, in the old days I used to enjoy watching James Brown funkying himself into a frenzy. Brown panted when he danced and sang. He would do a very hectic number and then slow down. You could hear the sharp intake of breath, you could note that this man was working and needed all the strength he had to keep enough breath to continue singing. These days, dancing singers rarely pant. Are they fitter? Their voices seem unaffected by all the aerobics carried out on stage. Surely, even the uninitiated should realize that most of the singers are either using pre-recorded tracks to enhance their vocals or have in their back-up line a number of sound alikes who carry the tune while they perform. Ultimately, the performance is stunning and it impresses even the most cynical and maybe that is enough. However, while these feats of technological magic may have their place in the music business, there is something grossly distasteful about singers who brag about their ability as artists when they are in no way deserving of the attention they have received.

The Milli Vanilli scam is essentially an insult to the the audiences that have supported them. It was only a matter of time before the Grammy would be taken from them. Canada has waited too long to take away the Juno musical award from them as well. If there was a way to take the money from them also, it would be wonderful. The musicians who allowed themselves to be used in this way deserve some chastisement for their lack of integrity, however there is no doubt in my mind that they were well paid for their efforts.

All of this may have done little to dissuade pop fans from flocking to concerts that are essential feats in lip-synching, and the worship of stars whose talent lies in their physical appeal and their capacity to tickle the collective imaginations of millions of teenage girls. The real deceivers are not the artists. The producers are the deception artists because they are the ones who construct the image of these musicians and construct the musical product that is credited to the stars. It is hoped, however, that something will have been learnt from all of this. In the first place, when awards are to be given, the nominees should be investigated properly to see if their work is in fact authentic. Secondly, those found "cheating" should be fined. Giving credit is not a very difficult thing and true artists like Paul Simon seem to have no problem doing that.

Milli Vanilli claim that they will be putting out their own record on which they will sing. Based on the testimony of the producer who made them stars, this should be a hilarious album. More tragically, it would seem as if these guys will have to use their own money to produce and sell such an album because who will buy their stuff now? To make it again they will have to be overwhelmingly great musicians which they are not. They deserve what they have received but their producer should not be let off the hook. Producers like this will continue to deceive the public, but whenever they are caught they should be severely punished.

All in all, though, one must conclude that it is all show biz. This means that many could argue that as long as the fans like it it is alright. Only purists will say otherwise and they don't often make it big financially. So cynical that I am, I can only conclude that there will be many more Milli Vanilli-type scams. I am just happy that this one finally came out in the open.

The Brunswickan

Canada's oldest official student publication
The University of New Brunswick

Editor-in-chief Kwame Dawes
Managing Editor Lynne Wanyeki
News Editor Allan Carter
Business Manager Josée Guidry
Co-Sports Editor Kelly Craig
Co-Sports Editor Frank Denis
Co-Entertainment Editor Stephane Comeau
Co-Entertainment Editor Sean Malley
Features Editor Ryna Brideau
Offest Editor Steve Seabrook
Distractions Editor Jayde Mockler
Photo Editor Al S. Tare
Advertising Manager Tara Froning

Advertising Design Lori Durley

STAFF THIS ISSUE

Aime Phillips, Murray Carew, Tony Tracy, Kathleen Johnson-Tracy, Mark Savoi, Eric Drummie, Paul Campbell, Chris Campbell, Dr. Vic, Pamela Fulton, Michael Tower, Geoffrey Brown, Deborah Ruth Wilson, Chris Kane, Brian Linkletter, Chris Hunt, Pat Fitzpatrick, Jamie Rowan, Randy Goodleaf, Dave Smith, Mike Doherty, Barry Leblanc, Louis Cardoso, Mark MacDougall, James Taylor, Bill Traer, Terry Richards, John Valk, P.R.I.L., A. Milne, Susan Kennedy, Naubd, Tracy Underhill, John Cameron

Typists Extraordinaire:

Denise Holloway, Jayde Mockler

The Brunswickan, in its 125th year of publication, is Canada's oldest official student publication. The Brunswickan's offices are located in Rm 35 of the University of New Brunswick's Student Union Building, P.O. Box 4400, College Hill, Fredericton N.B., E3B 5A3. Tel. 453-4983.

The Brunswickan is published by Brunswickan Publishing Inc. and printed with flair by Global Printing & Binding Inc., Fredericton, N.B.

Subscription is \$25 per year. Second class mail is in effect - #8120.

Local Advertising rates are available from The Brunswickan, (506) 453-4983. National advertising rates are available from Youthstream Canada Ltd., 1541 Avenue Road, Suite 203, Toronto, Ont. M5M 3X4, Tel: (416) 787-4911.

Articles printed in The Brunswickan may be freely reproduced provided proper credit is given.



M

So Maggie Th woman has ha will be very wondering wh Thatcher retur "Rule Britanni price that has conscious Bri speaking of he royalty. The fr Canadian life that stuff. Any can hope again

Don't you just lead the way i the Juno from think why the life. The Milli of political li you hear a pol

Fires burning forty false al term? We at caused by All two students possibly face their little gam been coming hence, these p

Turns out tha Marc Braithw isn't it? Kevi Brunswickan teaching you lessons, eh?"

We here at th CHSR. We a line of broad has not been the facilities station and it our pals ups working of th down here at please, let's g

This is gettin UNB? Whoe the secret. It putting up th Library is no skidded again

Fletcher and a bit confus Brunswickan they knew w were taking events were royally screw Well, these t out a blooper

The Student thanking Gor out with the councillors w you never kn

Andrew Cui year old wh some ugly ur sled on camp "crime-stopp doing all thi <Mark Lock wonderful jo

Well, I am o back next w their Thanks

Kwame Daw

PS. I am th have lost my them? Give