

ARTS & CULTURE

Atlantic Canadian music in Atlantic Canada

Kim Stockwood, Tara MacLean hit the Marquee

BY JOEL MARSH

The Marquee played host to established singer-songwriters Tara MacLean and Kim Stockwood on Saturday, November 6. The \$14 cover was worth it, according to the hundreds filling the venue to take in some Atlantic Canadian talent.

Tara MacLean was the first to take the stage. A small ensemble of a percussionist, herself, and a guitarist proceeded to delve into a set of acoustic folk-pop-rock songs in MacLean's familiar style. She was surprisingly dynamic, and the crowd couldn't help but to stay interested as she moved between slow and mid-tempo

songs. However, she did mix it up part way through the set with her song from television's *Felicity*.

All in all, MacLean was pleasing, and warmed up the crowd nicely.

Following a brief intermission, Kim Stockwood took the stage. Known for her Canadian hits "Jerk" and "12 years old" among a few lesser hits, I expected a show full of catch, poppy rock songs full of light, innocent lyrics and a lot of energy. Although the lyrics and style were as anticipated, the energy seemed to be lacking.

Even with a band of talented musicians, Kim Stockwood

seemed to lose the momentum that Tara MacLean had accumulated. MacLean had produced an interesting set of ups and downs, while Stockwood was merely repetitive. Although it would be inaccurate to say the performance was not entertaining, it failed to reach an expected level of energy and diversity.

It wouldn't take much for me to see Tara MacLean again, but the same cannot be said for Kim Stockwood. In order to be coerced into attending another one of her concerts, Stockwood would have to be the opening act for a band that can keep my interest for longer than two songs.



Jerkin' around the Marquee: Kim Stockwood proves redundant.



Ron Sexsmith

The boy around the corner echoing in the bathroom

BY SHELLEY ROBINSON AND KATIE TINKER

Ron Sexsmith was playing an acoustic guitar but you could hear him in the downstairs bathroom.

Which, since it was a Friday night at the Marquee and the dance floor was packed, says something. Sexsmith has the power to shut people up and make them listen. Even when they're drinking.

So the normally lively night club took a breather on Friday November 5 for an uncharacteristically mellow concert with Ontario singer-songwriters Emm Gryner and Ron Sexsmith.

Sexsmith is a much-lauded performer. The kind everyone wants to tell everyone else about and yet wants to keep a special secret. And Sexsmith is almost as well known for his famous connections as his music. Elvis

Costello, Sarah McLachlan and Peter Gabriel are all friends and admirers. And it's easy to see why.

There's something about his sweet melodies and evocative lyrics — a child walking through a graveyard, a girl with strawberry blonde hair — that makes you sentimental without feeling cheezy.

It makes you more appreciative of the small things. The hot nuts dispenser flashing on and off. The fans starting, revolving and stopping, over and over again. The voices of the people at the next table.

It was the kind of music you could listen to on the dance floor or sitting at a table at the back of the bar, sipping beer and chatting occasionally. You could fall in love with it either way.

His lyrics are reminiscent of Bob Dylan; his voice and melodies of Simon and Garfunkel.

Backed by Rheostatics

guitarist Tim Vesely and drummer Don Kerr, Sexsmith delivered a tight set of songs from all three of his albums, including his latest *Whereabouts*.

Opener Emm Gryner also had a decent set of songs — some solo, some with the band. But people didn't have the same swaying awe that they did as soon as Sexsmith hit the stage. In his set, people called out favourites and he played two long encores to fit them all in.

Back in the bathroom a woman with tight jeans and big hair was asking people how they liked the show. She said she just had to know — she was a friend of Ron's from back home in St. Catharines, Ont.

And that's the kind of guy Sexsmith is and the kind of music he plays — familiar yet haunting. He's the boy around the corner, and yet you're proud to know him.

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