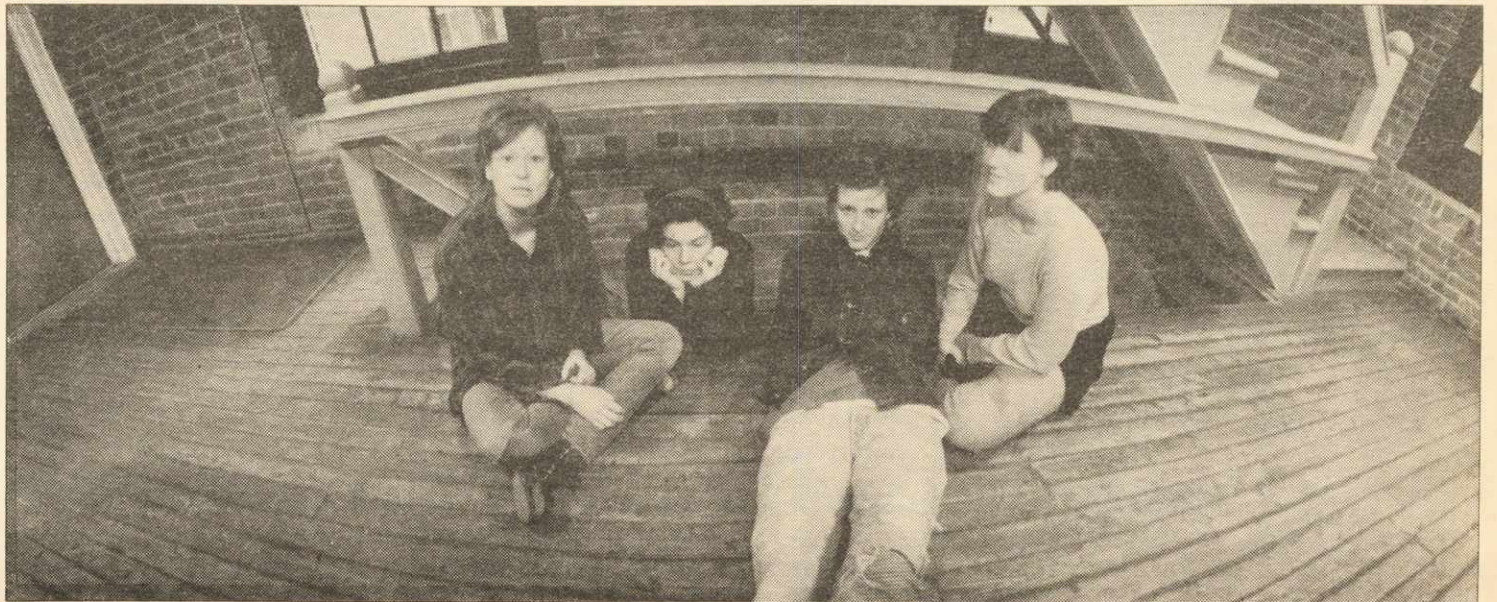
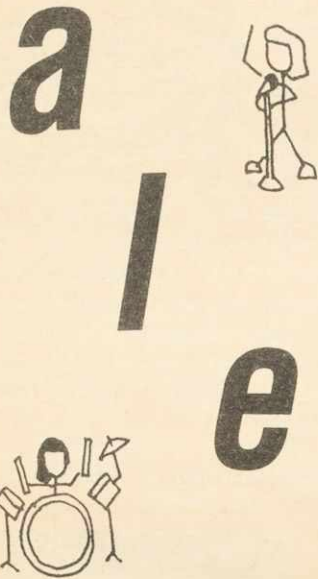


jale breaks out of Halifax scene



Jale provides a sweet distortion of the "meaningless" alternative media photograph. They have recently signed with Sub-Pop of Seattle.

by Bruce D. Gilchrist & Co.

What is jale? jale is the next thing in the Halifax Music Scene. Combining layered high vocals and distorted guitar harmonies, jale successfully blends in the force of traditionally alternative hardness with a keen melodic knack for good songwriting. And above all else, they have a great sound, and are nice people and avoid that unnecessary in your face attitude that plagues many other bands that play hard. Simply put, they work hard, they have talent, and you are going to hear them, and you may very well like them.

Comparisons abound with the Breeders and L7, and these are respectful, but the four women of jale create their own sound. On the strength of their Aunt Betty EP, and their fantastic recording for Sub Pop's "Never Mind the Molluscs" compilation, jale's four members been offered recording deals from more than one label, and jale has set itself with Sub Pop, the home of Seattle rock, and now many rough-edged Haligonian bands as well. Last month I spoke with Alyson MacLeod, Eve Hartling, and Jenny Pierce from jale about their record company, life in Halifax, what a 'sound' is, and what is the mystery about their name. Enjoy.

Gaz: So, how does it feel to have the American record company Sub-Pop coming to you?

jale: It's really cool to be approached by American record labels. But Sub-Pop especially, it's the coolest label in the whole world. So it's quite a compliment.

Gaz: Are they going to give you advances for records?

jale: We haven't actually signed anything. We just had a proposal, a deal. And there's not much money with Sub-Pop, because it's sort of with independent labels. It's not as much money as we would be on a major deal. Sometimes it looks more on a major deal than it actually is.

Gaz: Do you want a major deal?

jale: Major labels bad! (Many laughs).

Gaz: Warner is not a good idea...

jale: That's what our friend Bob Esen told us. He was the engineer for the Sub-Pop singles that we did with Sloan and Eric's Trip. We want whatever is a good deal is, it doesn't matter.

Gaz: You just recently cut a single for the Sub-Pop "Never Mind the Molluscs" Halifax compilation. How did that go?

jale: It was fun. Really, really well.

Gaz: Where did you record it?

jale: At Solar, above Music Stop. Before that we were at Terry Pulliam's studio. So it was the biggest studio

we'd been in. It was a 24 Track there.

Gaz: So it's better than Adinsound (studios) for instance.

jale: Actually Patrick was there today, and he said it was really good, the sound that was coming out of there.

Gaz: Do you have a definition for what your sound is?

jale: A sound? No.

Gaz: So it's irrelevant.

jale: (Eve) Yeah. (Jenny) No. I think it's just still forming. We're getting our sound still. It's getting close, I think, to a sound.

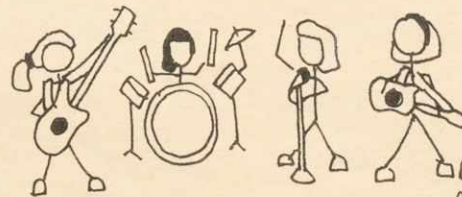
songs? Like songs about being really cold!

jale: No, I don't know if that has anything to do with it. (Jenny) We write about ourselves, and we're from here so maybe that's the Canadian content. (Alyson) I'd like to be thought of as a Canadian band. And not just that Seattle of the East and all that jazz. Being a 'Canadian' band would be great.

Gaz: A real cultural identity?

jale: That's true.

Gaz: Do you still go to school, any of you?



Gaz: What do you think is more important: to have a 'sound', or to be able to play well?

jale: I think those are two of the same thing. I mean, the way you play is what your sound is. So unless your sound is pretty bad or you've totally copied someone, you're going to have your own 'sound'.

Gaz: I've seen you play several times and I kind of thought that, uh you may not like this, but that your playing was not as hot as some of the other bands around town, but that your sound was superior. So I've sort of had an idea that being able to play really well doesn't really matter, if you don't sound good. If you sound good, that's what counts.

jale: (All) But we want a sound. (Alyson) We want to get better, but we've only been playing for less than a year, so there's only so much we can do, but hopefully the originality is there. It does seem like we're getting somewhere. (Jenny) Yeah, there's something about the songs. I think the sound is more about the songs, and the kind of sounds that we like, and the vocals. We've been encouraged because we have something of a good sound, and we have good ideas about things, and its encouraged us in turn to keep playing better, and just to get better, and it works.

Gaz: What about Canadian Content? Do you see yourselves as a Canadian voice at all, through your

jale: Alyson's not. (Jenny). I just started at the art college.

Gaz: So you sort of have two careers going here...

jale: (Eve) It's starting to be like that I think, but it's been manageable. (Alyson) It's not manageable for me. I'm glad I'm not going to school. (Jenny) Well I'm going to lose my job cause I have to go on touring and stuff.

Gaz: So you've got a job, you got a band, and you got school, and one of them's got to go?

jale: Well yeah.

Gaz: And it ain't going to be the band.

jale: (Jenny) It's going to be the income. Hopefully the band will start coming together.

Gaz: But if you get signed?

jale: That would be great. But it's not a lot of money.

Gaz: Do you feel a lot of pressure to get signed?

jale: Well there was pressure from the companies to sign, but I don't feel we have to sign at all. We want to sign with Sub Pop deal, because it's a fantastic deal, it would be shitty not to.

Gaz: What are the terms of the deal with Sub Pop?

jale: Our lawyers recommend that we don't say anything! It's a good deal, it's not huge sums of money at all, but it's a good short term deal.

Gaz: I was reading about Helmet and everyone was saying 'God they gave

them \$200,000 an album' but if you think about that they have to split it between five people and you've got production costs of about \$40,000, it doesn't work out to a whole hell of a lot.

jale: Divide that by 200. But it's about getting the opportunity to have the music put out and go on tours and with Sub Pop there's a lot more artistic licence, and we gotta take less money for that.

Gaz: Do you see a conflict between just having a lot fun and being 'professional'?

jale: (Jenny) Well I do sometimes when you don't feel like practicing and you have to come in and practice and that's the only conflict I've found so far.

Gaz: And in how you write your songs? It's always what you want?

jale: Oh yeah, totally. (Eve) The only thing is that I think we work harder as we take ourselves more seriously. Like at first it was just a joke. But then you treat it with a little more respect. (Alyson) And people expect a lot when you have companies offering you deals, and it's like oh yeah let's see!

Gaz: Because of the money being involved in the scene has that changed the way people view local bands and the way that the local bands act?

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PHOTO: MIKE GRAYMAN

Jenny Pierce of jale, playing at the Cod Can't Hear recording.