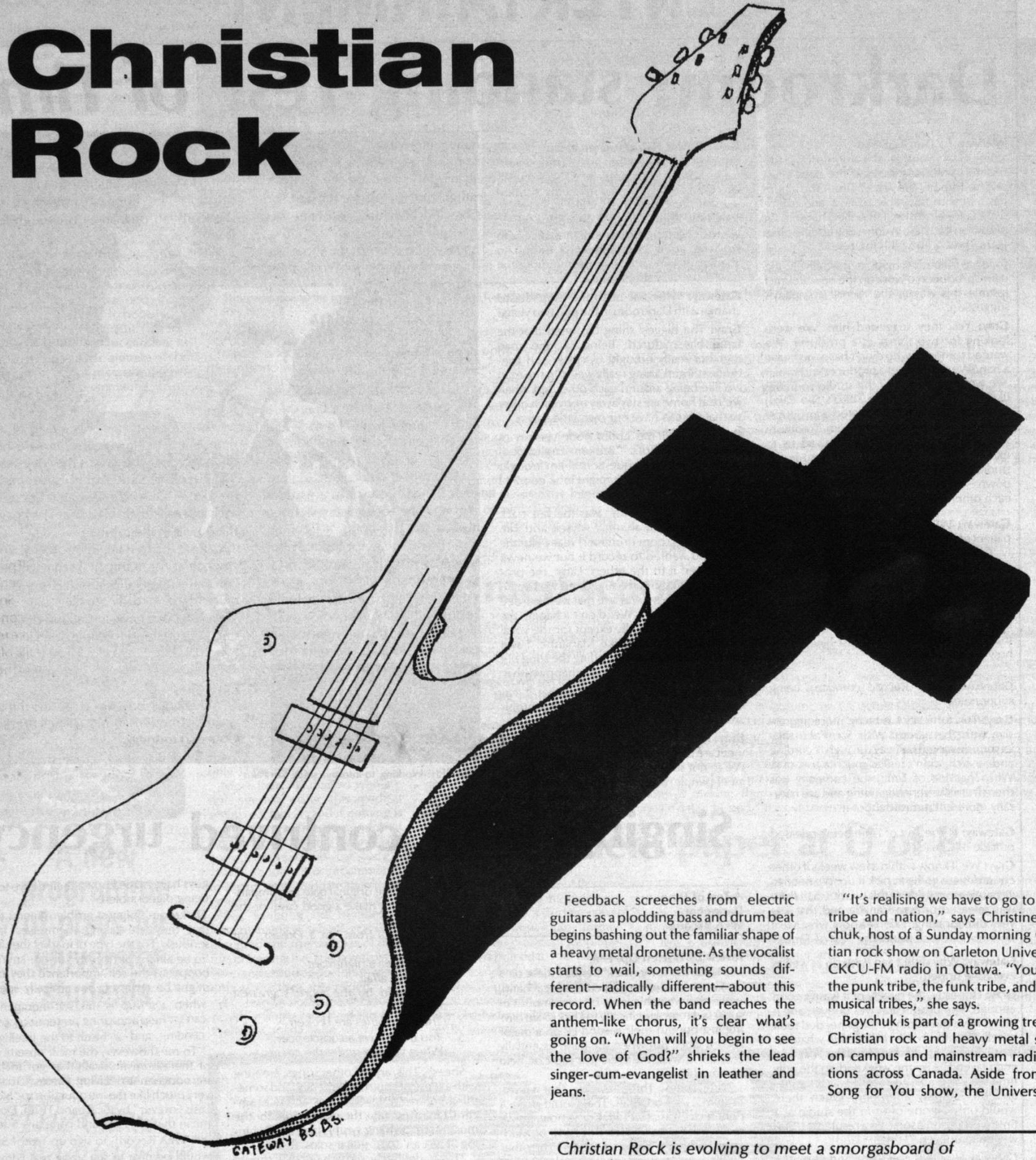


Christian Rock



Feedback screeches from electric guitars as a plodding bass and drum beat begins bashing out the familiar shape of a heavy metal dronetune. As the vocalist starts to wail, something sounds different—radically different—about this record. When the band reaches the anthem-like chorus, it's clear what's going on. "When will you begin to see the love of God?" shrieks the lead singer-cum-evangelist in leather and jeans.

"It's realising we have to go to every tribe and nation," says Christine Boychuk, host of a Sunday morning Christian rock show on Carleton University's CKCU-FM radio in Ottawa. "You have the punk tribe, the funk tribe, and other musical tribes," she says.

Boychuk is part of a growing trend of Christian rock and heavy metal shows on campus and mainstream radio stations across Canada. Aside from her Song for You show, the University of

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God's message is taking a new form as fundamental Christians realize that a rock and roll beat may be their best tool to appeal to young souls. They've found a new way to spread The Word—Christian rock music.

Traditionally a safe home for genteel white-clad singers such as Pat Boone or church choirs and quartets, gospel music has been diversifying, much like the entire "Christian industry" in North America. That means using any and all means to spread the Christian message in the lean, mean '80s. Missionary workers are changing to meet the demands of today's youth. They're travelling through uncharted airwaves just as their forefathers travelled abroad to unknown lands to convert the heathen.

Western Ontario Boasts two shows, one mild and one strictly hard rock. Dalhousie's CKDU had a Christian rock slot last year, and there are numerous shows in Western Canada. Off-campus, Q-104-FM in Dartmouth, has a show and at CFNY Toronto, ex-Lighthouse band leader Skip Prokop's Rock in a Hard Place show broadcasts the most metallic of modern hymns.

Christian Rock is evolving to meet a smorgasboard of musical tastes. On one shelf you can find the album Boys and Girls, Renounce the World with a new wave version of the hymn "Holy, Holy, Holy." On another album be Petra, whose covers bear an uncanny resemblance to those of the '70s band Boston, Petra's song "Over There" almost serves as an anthem for the Christian rock,

by Ken Burke
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