

# To Hell with My Lazer Guide d Girlfriend



by Dak Jjordani

Yes, folks, it's time once again to look at some of the latest music offerings, this time with three records from BMG/RCA.

First up is the odd album *Lazer Guided Melodies* from Britain's Spiritualized. I will tell you that their music is... different. I tried very hard (while washing my dishes) to come up with a suitable label that would accurately describe their sound but the best I could think of was "industrial new age". Other choices included "polysymphonic rock," "technogrind classical," and "synthomatic folk;" have a listen to the album and take your pick.

Essentially, Spiritualized's sound combines the sweeping atmosphere of new age with the industrial grind of Pink Floyd, and the haunting melodic lyrics of Lou Reed. Weird stuff, eh? If I were asked to pick a favorite track, I would refuse because the entire album is excellent. However, I will point out that the songs "Step Into The Breeze," "Symphony Space," and "Take Your Time" are quite notable for their haunting, yet powerful melodies.

While the bulk of the album is instrumental, the vocals that are present are pleasantly layered like instruments so they simply add more sound to the mix, instead of being separate (and possibly distracting) elements. Overall, *Lazer Guided Melodies* is interesting, entertaining, and quite enjoyable; a very mellow, yet stirring album. RATING: 7 (out of a possible 10).

MATTHEW SWEET



GIRLFRIEND

Next is Matthew Sweet's album, *Girlfriend*. Although this release is about a year old, the music is so good that it deserves a brief mention. Full of catchy, yet thoughtful, tunes, Sweet accomplishes what a lot of modern artists only dream of doing, and that is produce pop songs for the intelligent listener. If one were to define the elements that make up the modern pop songs, one would find that there are only three aspects: the music, the lyrics, and the performance. Unlike some artists, who might have one or two poor ones in each song they produce, Sweet has blazed his own path by making sure each song element is basically good. Every song on the album, from the single "Girlfriend" to the country-tinged "Winona" to the grinding, raunchy

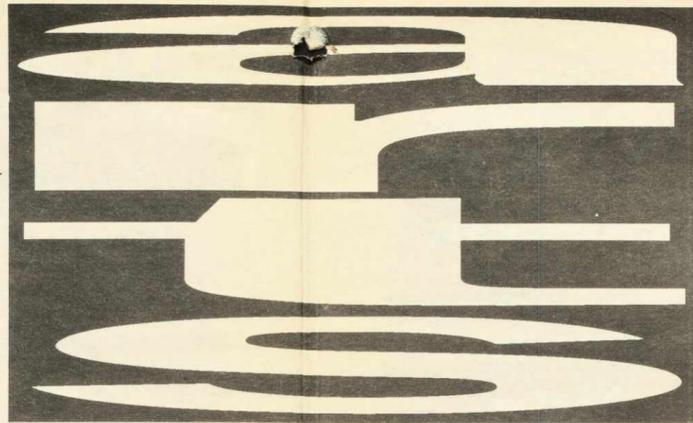
"Does She Talk", maintains a minimum standard of excellence. Therefore, instead of a mediocre album with one or two great tunes, Sweet has produced a simple, yet good album, the kind that endures and becomes one of your favourites over the years. Sure, there may not be a Number One, world-wide, smash-hit single here, but hey, who (aside from the record company) cares? When I plunk down my money for a new tape, I want a whole album worth of songs, not just one or two hit singles. Hell, if I wanted just one or two songs, I'd either buy the cassettes or wait for the latest hit parade compilation from Quality Records. Anyway, check this album out - if you like intelligent pop, you won't regret it. RATING: 7.



To Hell with Love

Last on my list for this week is a rockin' lass from Ireland known as Suzanne Rhatigan. Her debut album is titled *To Hell with Love* and it contains a nice collection of tough, dark, moody, emotion-packed songs. Now to clarify those adjectives. First, Isay "tough" because Rhatigan's voice has the same kind of rough, raunchy power as fellow female rockers Melissa Etheridge and Alannah Myles, a defi-

nite plus on her side. Second, "dark" describes the general tone of the album's lyrics: y'know, life is hell, life is shit, life sucks, etc. Third, her basic roots rock sound has a healthy dose of blues influencing it. This can cause depression and moodiness in the most optimistic of listeners, which, of course, is the desired objective - the listener is forced to empathize with what the singer is singing about. And fourth, "emotion-packed" is the only way to describe the vocal effort Rhatigan puts into her songs. According to her press bio, her inspiration comes from real incidents in her own life; if that's true, she must have led an interesting, but crappy, life prior to writing the album. Overall, not a bad debut, as far as tough, dark, moody, emotion-packed albums go. A good single or two, and Rhatigan will have a decent career to look forward to. RATING: 6.



Raven of Love  
6:45 am Oct. 5th 1992

The raven descends  
like falling leaves  
and rests alert  
beside the creek's edge—  
slowly his thoughts circle.

Yesterday is Cotton  
and I can open last night  
to live ecstasy again.

The soft touch of gentle kisses  
fills me with solid desires,  
needs that are thoughts—  
substantial.

Going around the corner  
gets monotonous  
if a guy keeps going around  
until he makes his peace.

The tranquility of trust  
evenly established  
between both bodies.

Woman, will you  
need me now,  
or will you run!

Allow my raven  
to head for home—  
security.

Todd Goyetche



THINK

## Upstart succeeds

by Helene Hyrek

Upstart Theatre's fall production, *Under the Skin*, which ran at Dalhousie's Sir James Dunn Theatre from September 29 to October 4, has succeeded in representing one of Upstart's many objectives, which is to bring to the foreground the relevant issues characterizing today's society.

The play, written by the late Betty Lambert, offers a disturbing look at the backlash of spousal abuse, rape, victimization and dire spiritual trauma, and encapsulates several elements of the human psyche which unveil the darker side of our human capacities.

The plot centres on three characters: Maggie Benton (played by Carol Godsmann), a college professor and mother plagued with the search for her missing daughter Emma, Renee Gifford (played by Martha Irving), Maggie's neighbour and friend who battles her own self-doubt in the midst of an abusive marriage, and John Gifford (John Dartt), Renee's domineering husband whose own instability manifests itself in vicious verbal and physical abuse against his wife.

While Maggie seeks Renee's support in her search for her twelve-year-old missing daughter she soon becomes immersed in the chaos of her friend's abusive marriage. As the play progresses, the audience is drawn towards Maggie's torment as she confronts her fear for her daughter and

defies her neighbours' suggestion that she carry on with her life. In one scene Maggie, forced to accept the inevitability of her daughter's death, weeps in emotional defeat, allowing the audience to consider the anguish of mothers confronting the loss of their child.

But *Under the Skin* portrays more than gravity of spiritual crisis. Its strength rests in its ability to penetrate the veneer of the human mind and reveal a darker core marked by disturbing and sometimes destructive inclinations. This becomes evident in the play's grim and shocking final act. Lambert succeeds also in depicting the ways in which we confront our fears, both those attributed to outside forces and those resting within our own human makeup.

The actors in *Under the Skin* each depicted superbly the dimensions of their characters, and drew the audience into a sincere, provocative portrayal of the grim realities marking everyday life. The play also succeeded in enlightening audiences on a variety of women's issues, and to further support this cause, audiences were provided with several pamphlets detailing information on women's crisis centres in the Halifax area and government statistics outlining the preponderance of family violence in our society.

Received positively by audiences, *Under the Skin* accomplished the task of raising public awareness. Undoubtedly Halifax theatre-lovers should look forward to future Upstart Theatre productions.



Hey Man, just what the hell was in that tea?

## Retro brew impresses

by Bruce Gilchrist

The Tea Party is a throwback to the days of marble records, eight track tapes and Led Zeppelin. They sport an almost nostalgic sound of the days before overproduction.

The Tea Party  
Grawood Oct. 16  
Eternal Discs

The Windsor Ontario trio is a 90's version of a late sixties/early seventies power band replete with beautifully arpeggiated guitar instrumentals and dynamic power songs bridged between highs of feedback distortion and lows with that Ravi Shankar Indian rhythm and a steady Bonham drumming feel. One can't help but to compare their 'sound' to Led Zeppelin, they should take it as a compliment.

Instrumentally they are particularly Zepplinesque with the wonderful Page-like slide guitar and Bonham-like heavy bass drumming. However, they are not a Led-Zeppelin cover band. It's just that no one else is doing that so-called retro thing the

way that they are, and this is what makes The Tea Party sound original. It's easy, and probably a mite unfair, to refer to the sound of a generation by its heyday leaders, but there really isn't a better way to express it, and it is worth a check out for your own ears.

They are still a non-major act however. This is probably due to three reasons, the first being that The Tea Party is a band who are authentically recreating the same

People don't  
know how to  
take them

atmosphere of the Zep era while retaining their ability to be themselves in the 90's. This has probably led to a state of confusion where people don't know how to take them. However, there is a great potential audience for this group in the 25+ age group who feel sort of 'homeless' in today's music scene, and could really appreciate what The Tea Party is doing. But will they get to listen to them (ie. would Q104 play The Tea Party?) Somehow it doesn't seem

likely, but they should. The second reason is that while The Tea Party have excellent bluesy slow songs and instrumentals, they could really use a kick-ass power lead vocal tune to boost their identity (the Hendrix "Fallen Angel" is close). The third question mark is whether the lead singer can belt out this tune (he sounds like a combo of Joe Cocker and Jimi Hendrix - not exactly sweetly voiced).

Overall, there is a medium diversity on the album with the slow acoustic songs and the power rock songs on the first side giving way to blues rock on the second side. While it doesn't seem apparent that The Tea Party could break from their self-imposed retro spell, it doesn't seem entirely necessary either. It's all a matter of good song writing and instrumentality of which their obviously capable blending with a cultured acceptance brought through live performance. Hopefully The Tea Party can improve their songwriting to produce more memorable songs that can add to the work of the past without being locked to it.

The Tea Party plays the Grawood on Friday Oct. 16th.

## Lend Me a Tenor charms

by Peter Angione & Lesley Pairier

It was Friday night. After an exhausting week of school we were off to Neptune Theatres season premiere, *Lend Me A Tenor*.

It was a love story, no, it was a comedy, wait, we think it was an operetta, well however you classify it was a fabulous show. It was an entertaining, captivating, and flawless performance. The acting was impeccable, the set extravagant, and the costumes appropriate.

The play takes place in a hotel suite in Cleveland, Ohio in September, 1934. The Cleveland Opera Company, commemorating its 25th anniversary, is awaiting the arrival of

Italian star Tito Merelli. The company's organizer and his assistant find themselves in quite a fix when Tito finally arrives and announces he is unable to perform. Nonetheless, the show must go on. And go on it does, with Max playing a double role as himself and Tito.

The strong performance was obviously a team effort with no weak link in the cast. Paulina Gillis turns in a great performance as the famous tenor's wife, while Sam Mancuso and Paul McQuillan, in the lead roles of the tenor and his fill-in are hilarious. Wanda Buchanan, John Rutten, Elizabeth Richardson, Faith Ward and Michael Pellerin round out the strong cast.

Clearly we were not the only ones who enjoyed the performance and efforts of this season's director Linda Moore and her crew, as an immediate standing ovation followed their finale.

*Lend Me A Tenor* played on Broadway for 481 performances before closing in April 1990. It runs at Neptune until October 25, Tuesday to Friday at 8 pm, Saturday at 5 pm and 9 pm, and Sunday at 2 pm. Tickets are \$16 to \$25 with some last minute discounts available. For all you students, why not check it out Sunday, October 11, 8 pm when there is a pay-what-you-can-night.

Welcome to Spiff Part 3: a parabolic reality. Last week Spiff was imprisoned with his sicko "roommate." This week: Spiff's paradise regained.

