

Entertainment



Mike Dean Photo

by Jethelo E. Cabilete

Friday night, November 4, was a rollicking good time, when Uisce Beatha and Great Big Sea took to the stage at the SUB ballroom. The concert began a little later than expected, due to an unfortunate vehicle breakdown on the outskirts of Fredericton. However, the wait was well worth it, as the crowd of over 140 people were treated to Celtic rock and folk music, Maritime style! Certainly the crowd welcomed the bands with calls for favourites and much carousing, often singing and dancing to the music played by these good old boys from the Atlantic region.

Hailing from St. John's, Newfound-

land, Great Big Sea's Alan Doyle (vocals, acoustic & electric guitar), Bob Hallett (vocals, fiddle, mandolin & button), Sean McCann (vocals, bodhran & tin whistle) and Darrell Power (vocals, bass, acoustic guitar & mandolin) began the night in traditional Newfoundland style. These guys have been together for over a year and a half, and their talents and skills come through quite well in their easygoing romp through the music. The vocal abilities of the band, coupled with their musical talents, make them a band worth hearing. They're not just a bunch of guys who can play an instrument and hope that their voice doesn't give them away, but these guys really love what they do, playing their songs and exchanging

snappy banter with the crowd. Many of the songs that Great Big Sea played came from their self titled debut recording. Songs such as Excursion Around The Bay, Berry Picking Time, Some Day Soon, were energetic and got the crowd on their feet, clapping, singing and dancing to the music. Other times, they performed their versions of classical favourites such as Bruce Cockburn's *Lovers In A Dangerous Time* and R.E.M.'s *The End Of The World As We Know It*. To give you an idea of how fun-loving these guys were, they performed an acappella-like rendition of *Rocky Road To Dublin* and *The Chemical Workers' Song*, using only the bodhran (a drumlike instrument) for the beat; at one point, Sean McCann jumped down among the crowd and danced and played right along with the revellers. After that night, Great Big Sea tours the rest of the Atlantic region, and then home to St. John's, Newfoundland for a brief rest and work on their next recording.

After a brief intermission, Uisce Beatha (pronounced Ishka Baha) arrived on stage. Meaning Waters of Life in Gaelic, the band certainly put a lot of life into the already hyperactive crowd, storming the stage with the same fire and verve that Great Big Sea began with. The difference is that this band has a somewhat hard-rock musical edge to a lot of their original music. One could tell that these guys have performed before, and with plenty of experience to back them up. The vocal and instrumental abilities of the band members have already been refined, producing an excellent quality of music. Allan Glen (vocals, acoustic & electric guitar), John Glen (vocals), Damian Morrissey, Paul Meadows, Marty Coles and Doug Watt worked the crowd to a frenzy with their fast-paced and exhilarating music. Songs like *Bottle's End*, *Dream Reader*, *Boys Night Out* and *Whose Child Is This*, come from their two releases, *The Mystic of the Baja* and *Voice of the Voyager*. Additional music

came from songs written by friends and from traditional reels and jigs. *Dublin Lullaby* is an example of this. At first the vocals were lost amidst the instrumentals due to the disruptions caused by the sound system, but after some minor adjustments, the problem was fixed and the band's music could really be appreciated. They were greatly appreciated to the point that campus police were stationed at the front of the stage, to keep over-enthusiastic and somewhat inebriated carousers and dancers from careening into the stage. The rest of the band's touring schedule include Cape Breton, and Ontario, after which work on their third recording would be underway for the Summer.

Both bands gave great performances that night, and the crowd really enjoyed the music and atmosphere. The concert was a success, and I know that the students of UNBF and the rest of Fredericton would certainly welcome both bands back.

At Play '94' Good, Solid Entertainment

by Shantell Powell

At Play '94 was Stage Left's set of three locally-written one-act plays which took place November 2-5: "On the Raft," "Milk with Tea," and "Jack in the Box." If you missed them, you missed out on an evening of good, solid entertainment. Please disregard any other reviews you may have read about these plays. Opening up the show was "On the Raft," written and directed by r. Lance Ceaser. "On the Raft" is a quirky and poignant little story about male unbonding. Derek Winchester played Henry, the easily angered hairdresser. Although Derek's energy levels fluctuated, on the average he was very competent. John Hansen played Marty, the anally-retentive yuppie. John did an excellent job, and his facial expressions were as eloquent as his lines. Kirk McInerney, as Dave, was very natural with his lines and comfortable with his part. The only real problem with this play was an instance where lines were dropped and a big lapse of dead air resulted. Please please please! Learn to improv, and never mouth the lines to the actor who has forgotten them! This looks very very bad. Nonetheless, the performance wasn't half bad. It just needed more rehearsal time.

"Milk with Tea" was the next play of the evening. Written by Matthew F. Tierney and directed by Rodger I. Wilkie, this play was absolutely charming, if a bit of a Twilight Zone rip-off. This play was an example of techies and actors working in perfect harmony. Averill Baker was superb as Alex, the perky, cute 12-year old brat. Jennifer McNeil played Grandma. Her portrayal

was phenomenal, and this is only her second time acting! Look forward to more performances by her. Sarah Mullaly was wonderful as the understated Mary. I'm looking forward to seeing her in a more prominent role some time. And Olga Rinco was hilarious as Lisa, the hyperactive sugar-rush-six-year-old. There was one more performance, for those who unfortunately left early, thinking that the fat lady sang. (One note to front of house crew: please tell the audience if there is going to be a change of venue part way through the evening. A note in the programme isn't necessarily sufficient.) "Jack in the Box," easily the most powerful performance of the evening, if not the season, ended At Play with a solemn minor chord. More performance art than drama, "Jack in the Box" was a well-orchestrated multimedia production. The set resembled a midnight mass in crimson, with eerie reds and shadows played off the flickering glow of the candles and the television monitor. Eric Hill played Jack the Ripper with wry dark humour. Eric successfully made the old new in his performance. The audience was shocked into horrified swearing and muttering as he described juvenile incest and the mutilations of London prostitutes. But even as the audience was so disturbed, a strange black tendril of humour would slowly uncurl and slap them across the face.

Theatre UNB is very busy this year, and there is certainly more entertainment value to it than to swigging draft. The next plays up this month are "This is a Test!", "Nobody Sleeps," and "Stalag 69." These will be held at Memorial Hall at 8 pm, November 17-19. Don't miss them.

Arts Cabaret A Success

by Shan and Vik

Except for the lack of martinis, Memorial Hall Theatre took on all the trappings of a piano bar last Saturday. Yes, it was time for the 12th Annual Arts Cabaret. The genres of musical performances were varied, ranging from classical to R&B to grunge. Highlights of the evening were the Bicentennial Choir, Jeff Cook, Mark Chandra, Dan and Tania, Kirk McInerney, Jamie, and Jon Bartlett.

The Bicentennial Choir, under the direction of Stephen Peacock, performed a gospel, a Mozart, and a pop piece. Although the Mozart with its pleasant tenors and sopranos was our personal favourite, we both agreed that the poppy "Under the Boardwalk," if not to our taste, was the strongest piece. The guitar and piano worked well here as a counter-balance to the choir, and the alto section was put to their best use. The finest word to describe the music of the Bicentennial Choir is mellifluous.

Jeff Cook on piano and Mark Chandra on harmonica pulled a real audience-pleaser with their rendition of Billy Joel's "Piano Man." The piano-playing was exceptional and the voices of Mark and Jeff harmonized well. The charismatic Mark Chandra went on later to perform Tracy Chapman's song "Talking About a Revolution" which suited his voice perfectly. This was his strongest piece of the evening, despite an interesting mishap involving his pick and guitar.

Jon Bartlett, Kirk McInerney, and Jamie finished off the evening with a song reminiscent of the Beatles and the Stone Roses. The band members did a great job, but they overshadowed the strained voice of Kirk. This piece would have worked better as an instrumental.

The best performances of the evening were performed by Dan and Tania. Dan is a competent pianist, but what really blew us away was Tania's voice. Wow. What else can we say? Wow. Tania's voice reminds us of a really slow, sensual, smoky, and extremely sexy Tori Amos. (Note: Tania, if you've got to a recording of any sort, send it up to CHSR. I'll make sure you get lots of airplay—Shan.) Together, Tania and Dan performed several songs, including an "American Pie"/"Smells Like Teen Spirit" medley. If Dan and Tania are going to perform at next year's Arts Cabaret, you can be sure we'll be there.

In sum, the 12th Annual Arts Cabaret was a great evening of entertainment, even for unfortunate people who aren't in Arts.

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