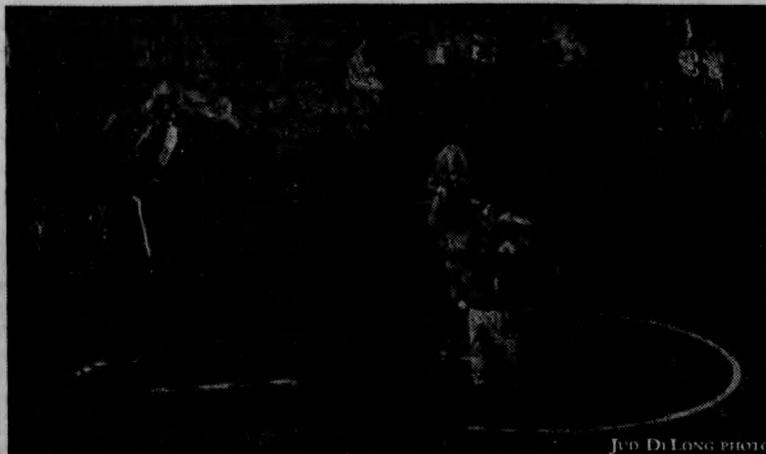


# ENTERTAINMENT

...music...films...exhibitions...theatre...arts...

## Looking backstage at the ECMAs



Cookie Rankin and Natalie MacMaster highlighted the opening number at last weekend's East Coast Music Awards.

PETER J. CULLEN

THE BRUNSWICKAN

The East Coast Music Awards showed Moncton more music than it has ever seen last weekend. With the 75 Hour Jam, ECMA showcases, album launches, 'secret' kitchen parties and several unofficial 'No Cases', the music literally did not cease from noon on Thursday until the Awards show ended late Sunday.

Of course, the main attraction was the award

ceremonies itself. However, it certainly wasn't as glamorous as it appeared on television. Twelve of the twenty awards were won by Natalie MacMaster (3), Great Big Sea (2), Sloan (2) and Ashley MacIsaac (a record 5). But Sloan and MacIsaac answered very few questions and actually insulted many reporters that waited to hear them speak.

"You people ask us how we feel about not winning. Well, hi, we won," sneered Sloan's Chris Murphy from the winner's podium. "We won

two in a row. How cool is that? My parents are thrilled."

Great Big Sea offered a much more pleasant attitude. The four men mentioned that their new album will hit record stores in May, and after winning the fan-determined Entertainer of the Year Award, the group stated that "it's encouraging enough to make us continue. Atlantic Canadians are really into Atlantic Canadians. They're concerned about the awards and who wins.... This is our favourite awards show. (Laughs.)"

But the artists appeared few and far between backstage. Most of the press watched the awards on television while others stood and chatted, due to a minimal amount of seats.

The low point of the evening was Ashley MacIsaac's turn at the mike. After the press patiently waited for him throughout the entire show, he quietly said, "I'm on display," as photographers snapped his image. He then mumbled something about his awards and fled the stage. He didn't make it too far. Caught in a media scrum, he rattled off a couple of quotes but quickly departed again.

Although the awards themselves were very interesting, those watching on television had almost as much insight as the media at the event. Perhaps Peter Gzowski summarized everyone's feelings in the backstage area when he spoke into the microphone, "Is that it? Can I go smoke now?"

## ECMAs' Alternative Showcase

JEN TRITTS

THE BRUNSWICKAN

For those of you who don't watch television and don't get out of your room, the East Coast Music Awards brought music galore to the city of Moncton over the weekend just past. One of the less prominent but more up-and-coming categories/shows was that of the alternative music.

On Sunday afternoon, four alternative acts set out to dazzle the audience and the media alike with a short set to each of their credit. The first band, Burnt Black, had a pretty cool sticker but they didn't seem to be all that interested in interacting with any of the people they were exposed to over the run of the Sunday performance. The three bands that followed, however, were refreshing examples of budding Atlantic Canadian talent.

Madhat of Lunenburg, NS, played the second set with exceptional energy, considering the 'Sunday afternoon' element of the show. This band is comprised of four young lads who got together eight years ago to make a little music. They definitely want the audience sampled on Sunday. They didn't play any outstanding songs in their eight song set, but they were consistent and full of action. The bands that followed followed in the same energy that was initially generated by Madhat, who were definitely the ideal opening act.

The closing band was Spunk, a four man band from St. John's, Nfld. This young band, until now, played St. John's exclusively, to one can only imagine the adventure they embarked upon when they set out for the ECMAs. They described a centro road encounter with a scum as only one of the ingredients that made their Atlantic travels epic. The final ingredient would their closing on

the energy that Madhat began, with some consequences. Their set began rather uneventfully, but after the thrashing of the bands who preceded them, Spunk had to deal with a drum set that had been knocked off balance and a stage that had simply seen too much action for one afternoon. In spite of these physical difficulties, the band pulled the set together and showed Moncton what the St. John's alternative scene is all about.

Fredericton's own Smiley was the second-to-last band to play in the alternative showcase, but I felt theirs was the most energetic and talented performance, thus worthy of closing headliner act.

The bass player, Jeff Wheaton, leapt on stage with a tube of toothpaste and introduced the band: "This is Smiley and this (he set) is happy, so put on your Colgate smiles (tossing the toothpaste aside)." And that was the beginning of their set, by far the most dynamic of the line-up.

So there you are, the band played six songs to their set, but there the toothpaste remained, under the jumping feet of Alex Madson, lead vocal and guitar. All I could concentrate on was the tube that would hurt so much if stepped on in the right—or wrong—way! So, in my preoccupation, I missed the details of the band's performance. I missed the facial distortions constantly flitting across Madson's face. I missed the mad leaps for the rafters. I didn't even notice how well the band played together, the range of talent they displayed. The fact that they are an alternative band, but they have so many different sounds that I—if I had noticed—would have been captivated just listening to them. But I did see Madson step on the toothpaste. No one was hurt, but, I missed the whole show.

## Canada's authentic road band



Moist performing live.

PETER J. CULLEN

THE BRUNSWICKAN

Kevin Young, keyboardist for Vancouver's Moist, had a recent chat with The Brunswickan regarding their upcoming performance at the SUB cafeteria. It is the third time that the band is coming to the East Coast since September, and this is something that not many bands do.

When asked how come they venture out east so much, Young says, "Part of that is that originally when we were touring Canada as an independent band, we didn't go any further east than Montreal, just because it wasn't feasible. We did quite a few tours when we didn't hit the east coast at all. There are still a number of places we haven't played which we'd like to." The response from audiences on the east coast is one that should guarantee return trips for quite a while.

Moist formed around 1993, and Young

described the band as Vancouver where they came together. "Essentially what happened was two groups that were not getting along together, and Jeff [Pearce, bass] and Matt [Makoway, guitar] had been working together. So we got together and we wrote some songs and went off and searched for a drummer. We tried out every drummer in Vancouver it felt like, and then we found Paul [Wilcox]. Shortly thereafter we were doing gigs and setting goals for the future, such as touring, which is when we really came to find out what we were about, as we were on the road all the time."

Touring is something that the band knows quite well. Having two stellar albums released since their inauguration, the band has been on an almost constant touring schedule. According to Young, "It's been about four years now since we started out as a band. [With touring] it's all sort of melt into one big year after a while. We've actually had some time over this Christmas, and we had six weeks off, which was the most time we've had off at one time for the entire time we've been together."

"We've always been about being a live band. It's our most comfortable place to be, and while we don't want to kill ourselves by being on the road all the time, we really think that is

important to get everywhere we possibly can, and let people see us live.

"It's been quite a schedule for the past four years but we have had a good time." The fact that the band is having fun while touring makes it a lot more enjoyable for the fans to come and see them. When you blend a popular, but not overplayed, sound with the fact that they are easy to see live and can write good songs, an easy explanation for their sound comes to mind.

A lot of their almost unique sound stems from using keyboards/piano on almost all of their songs. Not many bands have integrated using a keyboard as a regular instrument in the rock genre. They, and one like on Vancouver, "the success of a group like Moist may cause a bunch of bands to spring up using keyboards." "Remember a while there were very little keyboards present in rock and roll in the last few years; however, people seem to be experimenting with a lot of different instruments," says Young. "We've used a whole bunch of instruments on the album and we'll probably use the most of that if we go along."

With excitement, Young's spirit about the response of the upcoming show being cancelled by David Usher's recent bout with the flu. The band has full intentions of being there to play and enjoy it all. For the record, Usher's illness, Young says, "We had a flu, and it was a pretty hectic situation touring across the country. We try not to do more than three shows in a row these nights in a row simply because the band does tend to self-destruct after too many nights on, just because it's a very demanding rock show. Dave went down with the flu, and a couple of other things hit all at the same time. He blew his voice out, and so we had to dump three shows... which we will make up in mid-march." It is this attitude that is so great about Moist. They give their all for the fans because they realize that it's the fans who have been giving them the ability to tour the world. Too many bands these days are not willing to put all their energy into all their shows and let a nice piece to see this enthusiasm coming off the stage.

Another thing that UNB concert-goers should pay attention to is the band's stand on smoking and crowd surfing. They are all for high energy and the activities that go with the energy, but they do not want to see people get hurt. "We do like an enthusiastic crowd. The one thing is we just ask people to take care of each other. It's important that everybody has a good time and does what they feel like doing."

The band's future plans hold constant with what they have done since they began touring. They have no plans for another new album, at least "not for quite a while," according to Young. The current album has enough momentum for the next while, and they plan to film and release another video sometime in the next few months. So, for Canada's road band, there are no major changes as they continue down the road.

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## Here are the winners of last week's contest (the Moist and ginger albums)



The ginger question was: What are the titles of the two ginger albums?

(Far Out and suddenly I came to my senses)

The ginger winners:

Aaron Oehlke

Amy Ross

Tanya Williams

The Moist question was: Name three singles off the group's Silver album.

The Moist winners:

Diane Parker

Tascha Chedore

Joey Lynch



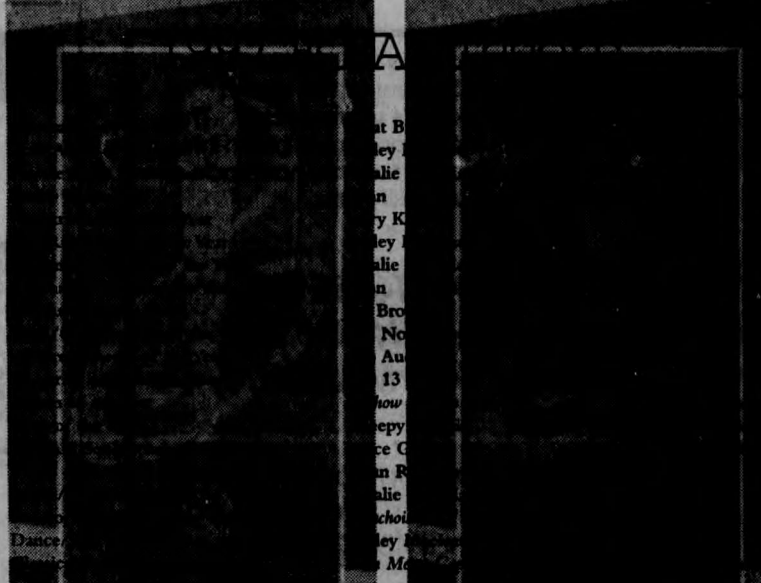
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• Theatre UNB presents Tom Stoppard's *The Real Thing*, tonight and tomorrow at UNB Memorial Hall. \$4 students/seniors, \$5 others. 8 pm.

• The Beaverbrook Art Gallery *Anda Richard Lathrop: E-Work* - Now - Mar 2/97. Saturated Fields: Colourfield Painting in the Permanent Collection, and Exotic Foreign Locations, both on display until March 16.

• Mardi Gras at the Market: Saturday, 7:30pm at the Boyce Farmers Market. Tickets \$10/\$12. 454-2543.

• UNB Art Centre presents *Common Ground* (clay works by Craig Schneider) and *Tempting Feet* (paintings by Philip Iverson) at Memorial Hall. Now - Sunday. Illusion of Barrier, and installation by ARIZONE, the UNB art club, and Showcase '97, featuring UNB and STU students. On display Feb. 27 - Mar. 30. FREE. 453-4623.

• Gallery Connexion presents *Sep* by Beata Popeacu and Shawn O'Hagan. Now - Feb 28/97. 454-1433.

• Here on the Flight Path: Dinner and Theatre. Phone 451-7936 for details.

• Eckankar, Ancient Science of Soul Travel, Monday, Feb. 24, 7:30pm, MacLaggan Hall, Room 125. 458-5307.

• First Thursday Jazz Series, Pianist Bernie Senensky, drummer Bob Moses, River Room, 8:00pm. Free. 1-888-622-5837.

• Stage Left presents *The Playboy of the Western World*, March 12-15, Memorial Hall, 8pm. \$5. 447-3078.

• Capital Film Society presents *Secrets and Lies* at Tilley Hall 102, Feb. 17, 8 pm. \$3 members, \$5 non-members.

• New Brunswick Museum presents *Frets of France* at Market Square in Saint John. Now - Apr 30/97. Also Folk Art now on display. (506) 643-2300.

• Moist & ginger, tomorrow night in the cafeteria.

• Smiley, Saturday at the Dock, Sunday at the Upper Deck.

• Conception Fit at Rye's Deli Saturday.

If you have an event you would like to publicize, send all relevant info to "Know Where To Go", c/o The Brunswickan. Submissions can be sent via fax (453-4958), or by e-mail (brunna@unb.ca). Or, simply drop off your information at The Brunswickan office, located at Room 35 in the SUB.