

Chantal Kreviazuk: intimate and zany

BY PHIL E. LEWIS

While talking with Chantal Kreviazuk before her show at the McInnes Room last week, I'll admit I was a little star struck. Kreviazuk may not be the biggest name in the music industry, but I'm a fan.

"The last couple of years I've worked really hard," said Kreviazuk, "and it makes me feel good that I can go into a show and hold my own now."

The show started with a short set from Emm Gryner, a folksy artist from Toronto. The set may not have been the best choice for an opening. Rather than warming up the crowd, she was mostly treated like background music...a sign of things to come.

Kreviazuk came out on stage around 10:45pm. She was greeted by a crowd populated for the most part by drunken frosh. The crowd seemed to only want one song, "Leaving on a Jet Plane", a tune from the *Armageddon* soundtrack, and Kreviazuk's new signature.

"I've had audiences that really want one song but I've never experienced it like this before," Kreviazuk said after the concert.

The performance was a lighthearted affair with a lot of interaction between the artist and the audience. In the latter part of the show, a man with a kick-ass impression of *South Park's* Eric Cartman got her attention and was told to come on stage. The crowd was then treated to a comparison of Kreviazuk's Cartman impression with the audience member's.

While the interaction and comedy bits were entertaining, they

did not allow enough time for her music. The comedic break seemed to come out of frustration brought on by the small crowd's obvious interest in drinking instead of Kreviazuk's singing.

Kreviazuk performed at Acadia before arriving at the McInnes Room, but left before that show was over. Rumours began floating around the SUB that she was in what could best be described as a really bitchy mood. Kreviazuk said that she had left the Acadia show because of the actions of a few.

"I wasn't upset with the crowd," said Kreviazuk. "I was upset with the extra people that just came to drink. They weren't really paying attention to the music and thought they would just come to be part of the crowd. I don't take well to a situation where it feels like I am the background music. Every show is different. It depends on what I expect from the crowd. It can depend on how the day was. If I had a good day I'll have a good show but maybe I won't because I don't want to work. It just depends."

Kreviazuk tried to explain what many of her songs were about, but the audience just wasn't interested. She tried to explain the story behind a new song but there were a few loud obnoxious voices telling her to shut up and play "Jet Airplane." This is a clear case of a few ruining it for the many. She tried to ignore them for as long as possible but eventually gave in and played the song earlier than planned.

Kreviazuk said that her song ideas come from either making a conscious effort to write a song or they just dawn on her.

"I remembered an experience from childhood," said Kreviazuk. "A woman behaved in a very strange way to me when I was a child. I didn't understand it then. As an adult I understand and I think she is

just a completely warped sicko. I think I am going to write a song about it."

Kreviazuk's album *Under these Rocks and Stones* has had a string of small radio hits that has given the album some longevity. She thinks her sleeper success may be a good sign of things to come.

"I don't feel that there was any overnight sensation to it at all," said Kreviazuk, "and that makes me feel confident that there is a potential career for me."

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