

PHOTO: JAMES BEDDINGTON

Behind the turntable

by James Beddington

Saturday, October 29 — the unofficial Mardi Gras... The Khyber Cafe on Barrington Street... the event: the regular Funk'shen, where a variety of DJs will play music for you late into the night. I caught up with Rat Brown after his set of spinning. Rat Brown is the man who won the Maritimes DJ Spinoff that happened at the Palace over Thanksgiving weekend.

Rat Brown seemed unfazed by his

success and is very down to earth. His name surprised me, for when I met him I noted that his appearance is no more rat-like than his mannerism — that is to say not at all.

He is soft-spoken and unimposing in spite of his large size. He has been spinning at house parties and special events in the area for a while, and he programs a show at CKDU on Saturday afternoons.

You should check Rat Brown out as soon as you can but you will have to work it to get dance floor space.

Local band alert



This week: Sloan



PHOTO: TECHNICALLY BY MIKE GRAHAM

Like I have to tell anyone that Sloan is from Halifax...well, they are playing this weekend so now is as good a time as any to talk about 'em.

I actually don't have very much to say except that they deserve the hype that they got (are they still getting any?). *Smear* and *Twice Removed* are amazing

albums. Bla bla bla...I love this band — go ahead and laugh.

Mike Graham

Great Big Sea whip up a Celtic frenzy at Dal

by Jennifer Partridge

Great big energy. Great big sound. Great Big Sea — a Newfie band with a whole lotta charm and some really funky tunes.

Friday, 28 October
Grawood

Friday night at the Grawood was the place to be — that is, if you are into sing-a-longs and high-energy jiggling to the beat of a band which takes traditional music and turns it on its head.

Alan Doyle, the band's talented songwriter, set the tone for the evening in his opening banter with a crowd filled with mostly university students. "It's wicked, absolutely dead

right on to be back in Halifax," he shouted amidst the cheers of his captive audience. "Halifax is our home away from home—a wonderful thing to have a drink to...So raise your glasses!" he urged in a noisy toast to "showing the rest of Canada how to party properly!" Then Doyle and his bandmates whipped up a good old Celtic frenzy.

Four talented musicians make up Great Big Sea's distinctive musical signature. Bob Hallett alternates between fiddle, accordion, mandolin and tin whistle. Darrell Power offers his skills on bass, Alan Doyle contributes his knack for songwriting in addition to playing acoustic guitar. Sean McCann plays the tin whistle,

acoustic guitar and the bodhran, a Celtic goatskin drum.

Their repertoire spans an incredible range—from the pop tunes by Barenaked Ladies to contemporary rock n' roll, and of course, traditional favourites.

"What Are Ya' At" was the song to remind a crowd filled with many Newfoundlanders of their home. With "Excursion Around The Bay" and "Drunken Sailor", the dancing became frenetic. And the din was positively deafening by the time they got around to singing their own distinctive version of Spirit of the West's "Home For A Rest." The crowd also ate up a memorable rendition of "Summer Days" from the hit movie

Grease. Power explained that "Alan has these periodic flashbacks."

But perhaps one of the best songs was that of "Someday Soon" from their self-titled compact disc. Again, subtle hints of Spirit of the West could be heard in its haunting notes and poignant harmony. Although the lyrics present the picture of "politicians making all these promises/house the homeless/bring peace/feed the hungry," Power brushes off the suggestion that these are overt messages. "We don't claim to be political," he says. "People are sick of hearing the worst message over and over again."

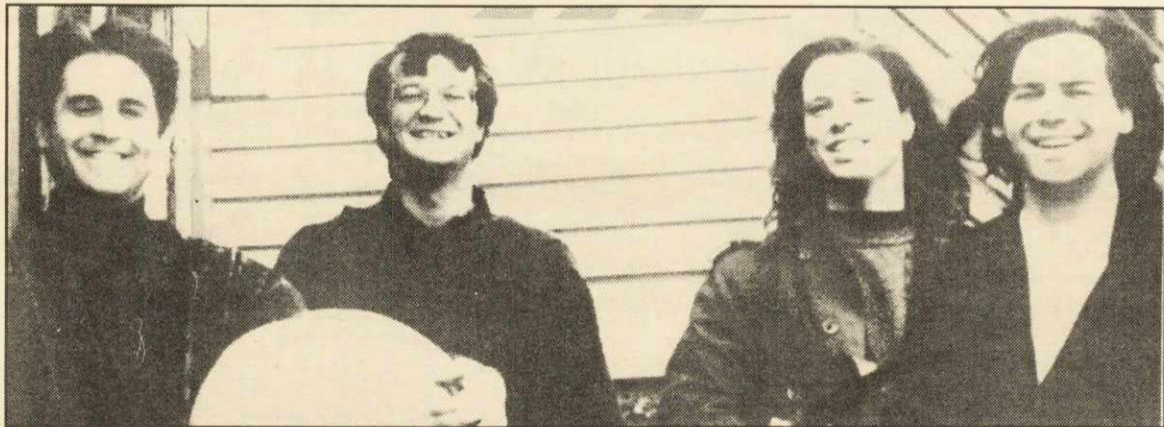
And what better way to get one's mind off the weighty cares of the

world than by having what Doyle calls "a good stomp"—liberally interspersed, of course, with several good drinking songs and plenty of beer to go along.

Crowd reaction to Great Big Sea was more than favourable, especially when it came to McCann.

"They are the best Newfie band—they are lovely-looking, especially Sean McCann," said Robyn Ellsworth, a King's student. Susanne Hiller, another King's type, echoed her friend's sentiments. "Sean McCann is meant for me. I know it."

Whether or not the rest of us agreed, Alan Doyle's prediction that "it's gonna be a mad night, I just know it..." certainly came true.



ARTIST PROFILE: Joachim Fernandez, 27 years old.

Ceramics (Wheel thrown with sculpted ornamentation)
Final year, Art Education Degree NSCAD;
has a Bachelor of Fine Arts at NSCAD and Crafts and Design Diploma from Sheridan College.

Gaz: What is your cultural background?

JF: I was born in St. Catharines, Ontario, but my parents are from Spain.

Gaz: What are your goals?

JF: To finish school; I have been in post-secondary education for seven years. I would like to teach for a couple of years and then look into getting a masters degree. I want to remain productive in art.

Gaz: Where does your inspiration come from?

JF: A lot of my work expresses philosophical concepts like human ex-



istence, the type of ideas that just lead to more questions.

Gaz: Do you have specific messages that you send out through your work?

JF: There is a reaction to things that are happening but it is a reaction, not necessarily a commentary.

Gaz: What was the most satisfying artistic experience you have had?

JF: In my more recent work I have found ways to express and capture huge complex ideas in simple ornamentation better than I ever could with words.

Gaz: Anything else you'd care to share with us?

JF: Well, I am getting married next October 31st.

Joe is one of many artists exhibiting in the upcoming Mosaic show at the Anna Leonowens Gallery November 14-20.

James Beddington

HG Wells explored

by Feng Tan

People will recognize H.G. Wells as the author of science fiction novels such as *The Invisible Man* and *The Time Machine*. In his biography, Michael Coren conveys his distaste towards Wells' works, views and personality. Coren writes that Wells had a hard life in his youth which made him "pernicious and destructive."

Michael Coren
The Invisible Man: The Life and Liberties of H.G. Wells
Vintage Books

Coren does have some positive comments about *The Time Machine* but notes that Wells tends to focus on the message that mankind is destined to have a bleak and violent future as long as the exploitation of a group of people exists.

I agree with Michael Coren's abhorrence to Wells' odd but controversial views; Wells believed strongly in anti-semitism, the holocaust and eugenics.

Wells' personality was indeed troubling. He liked to flaunt his put-down opinions towards rival authors like Henry Jones and J.B. Priestly.

He was jealous and possessive of his wife, Jane Wells. He was also involved in a number of extramarital affairs, including Rebecca West, and often neglected his wife and three children.

Some portions of this biography did interest me because it was like a soap opera. For instance: Jane Wells found out that her husband loved and impregnated another woman, Amber Reeves. The two women met each other one day, talked and cried together.

I find that this book needs to shed some light on some of the more positive aspects of H.G. Wells' writings. However, Coren does make his point clearly on why Wells should not be considered, as other critics deemed, to be "on the side of the angels."

Coren's book can be used as research for students who wish to look at the dark side of Wells' writings, the important figures he met (like George Bernard Shaw), his travels, his newspaper writings and so forth. However, I would not recommend readers to use the book for entertainment purposes because the book is mostly depressing.