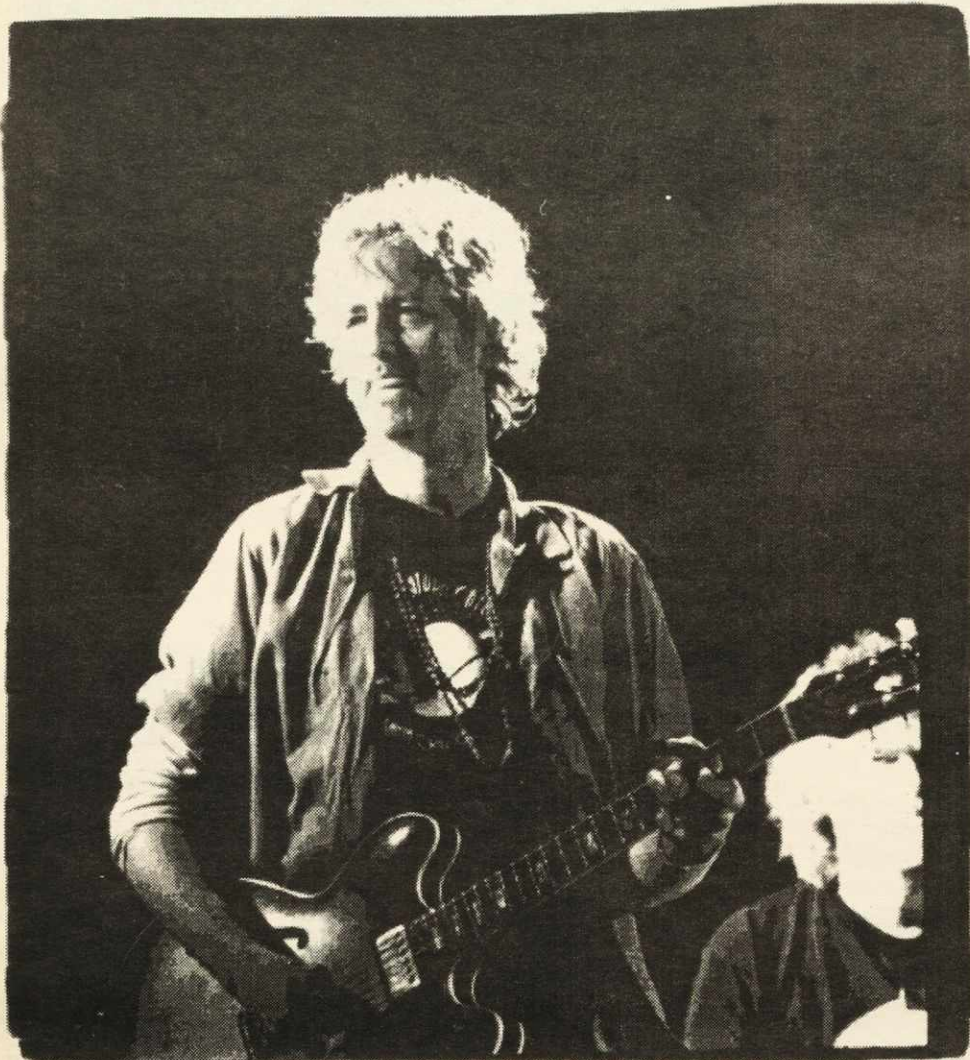


BLUE *rodeo*

& GREAT BIG SEA *in concert*



Blue Rodeo's Greg Keelor poured out favourite after favourite in the McInnes Room.

BY PATTI WALLER

The blue-eyed sky met the great big sea as Blue Rodeo played their second sold-out show this week in Halifax, this time at the Rebecca Cohn.

Monday night's performance was kicked off by opening band Great Big Sea from St. John's, Newfoundland. Their recently released CD *up* was mentioned often by lead singer Alan Doyle, as was their East Coast Music Award nomination for Entertainer of the Year.

Great Big Sea began their set with the striking "Chemical Worker's Song," with its economic irony and Doyle's Newfie-growl voice. With lyrics like "For every day you spend down here/you're two days nearer death," the song made the hair on the back of my neck stand up.

The band's great senses of humour and obvious love of music quickly lightened up the atmosphere and they had the crowd clapping and singing along to both "Mari-Mac" and the homesick-inspired "Whattaya At." Doyle joked with the crowd that they need not feel obligated to buy the group's CD, for "As ya can tell from our wardrobes (mostly plaid flannel and denim), we's rollin' in the cash...our album just went tinfoil in Penny Harbour, Nfld."

Great Big Sea's set was great, but almost deafening a more intimate, jump-around environment that the McInnes room show last Saturday surely would have provided.

Blue Rodeo took the stage amidst deafening applause and east coast hooting. Opening with a ten-minute version of "Five Days in May" from their second-

most recent album, *Five Days In July*, lead guitarist Greg Keelor (after some initial technical difficulties) got his trademark twang together enough to produce a side-splitting solo, and things only went up from there.

The funny thing is, you may love Blue Rodeo (there is no other voice in music I'd rather listen to than Cuddy's) and watch every video, but the range of their work over time and their number of hits becomes really striking when you listen to them all in a row. This only emphasizes the band's growth and sky-rocketing popularity. In addition, if the band had played one large show in the cavernous Metro Centre rather than five in closer, more acoustic venues like the Cohn and to a lesser extent, the McInnes room, the completeness of the band's sound and technical togetherness would be completely blotto.

Favourite after favourite poured out for almost two hours of continuous play, including "Lies," "Lost Together," the transcendental "Save Myself" (complete with drug-related anecdote by Keelor), "Come To Me" (my personal fave), and the band's most recent single, "Better Off As We Are" from their sixth album, *Nowhere To Here*.

The crowd that remained cheering after the first set were treated to an encore by Keelor — begun a capella — who revealed that he recently discovered that he was in fact adopted and was born in Inverness, Cape Breton. His visit to the area last summer spawned the words "Another motherless son...from the straits of Northumberland" that moved the audience to their feet once again. Even after a good part of the crowd left, the band returned for a second encore and the oldie-but-goodie "Day After Day." At this point, about fifty fans came to the front of the stage to sing and bounce along to the music.

Great Big Sea joked earlier that they had been showing this band from the west that there is no party like the Atlantic Canadian kitchen party. I'm sure that they've learned one thing about Maritimers — when the music's that good, we've just gotta jig.

the box

Neptune Theatre's 32nd season starts February 2nd with the big time musical comedy *Forever Plaid*. The performances will run until the 10th in the Rebecca Cohn Auditorium of the Dal Arts Centre.

Frog Hollow Books and the Halifax City Regional Library are presenting a reading by **Shyam Selvadurai** at the Halifax Main Library on Friday. Selvadurai will be reading from her novel *Funny Boy*, which chronicles the journey of a young Sri Lankan boy into adulthood. The novel won the Smith Books/Books in Canada First Novel Award and was nominated for the Giller Prize. The reading is at 7:30 p.m.

This evening, at the **Dalhousie Art Gallery**, Halifax artist Marilyn McAvoy will give a slide presentation of her work. The presentation is scheduled for 8 p.m., and is free of charge.

Next Wednesday, Jan. 31, the Dal Art Gallery will be screening **Roberto Rossellini's *Paisan***. Shot on location amidst the ruins and carnage of Italy as it emerged from the Second World War, the episodic 1946 work is the classic example of Neo-Realist style. The films start at 12:30 p.m. and 8 p.m. There is no cost but donations are appreciated.

This is the last week for Darci Mallon's exhibition at the **Eye Level Gallery** on Barrington St. "Aletheia: The Unconcealedness Of What — Is Present" runs until February 3rd, Tues. to Sat. from 12 p.m. to 5 p.m., at the gallery at 1672 Barrington St.

For the past six weeks, the Playwrights Atlantic Resource Centre has been hosting "**The Shoe String Reading Series**" every Tuesday night at The Economy Shoe Shop, 1633 Argyle Street. The readings begin around 8:30 p.m. and feature 15 minutes of light prose from one of Halifax's many wordsmiths. Admission is free, the draft is cheap, and the atmosphere is relaxed and casual. Get there early if you want to get a seat.

Upcoming writers in this ongoing series include: Jan. 30, Rod Malay; Feb. 6, Lucky Campbell; and, February 13, Mary Colin Chisholm. For further information about PARC's "Shoe String Reading Series" and/or to enquire about reading your work there, contact: Carol Sinclair at 423-7535. For further info about PARC, Contact: Christopher Reed at reedc@is.dal.ca

Weaver Sandra Brownlee's survey exhibition, "Weaving Out Loud," is on view at the **St. Mary's University Art Gallery** until Feb. 11th. The Maritime-born artist combines real and imagined animals, figures, symbols, and patterns in her weaving to express her spiritual and actual relationship to the natural world. The Gallery is open noon to 7 p.m., Tues. to Thurs., and noon to 5 p.m., Fri. to Sun.

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tc	lc	wo	cc	artist	title	label
1	n/a	◆		Eric's Trip*	The Road South	Sonic Unyon
2	n/a	◆		Ashley MacIsaac*	Hi™ How Are You Today?	A&M
3	n/a	◆		Four the Moment*	In My Soul	Atlantica
4	n/a	◆		Rhythm Activism	More Kick	Les Pages Noires
5	n/a	◆		Frontline Assembly	Hardwired	Metropolis
6	n/a	◆		Kittens	Tiger Comet	Sonic Unyon
7	n/a	◆		Radioblaster	Sugarshack	Squirtgun
8	n/a			Various Artists	Swarm of Drones	Ashphodel
9	n/a			Julian Cope	Presents 200 Mothers	American
10	n/a			Brian Eno/Jah Wobble	Spinner	Gyroscope

*: Local Artist
cc: Canadian Artist

re: Re-Entry
lc: Last Chart

tc: This Chart
ne: New Entry

Come to the GAZETTE, room 312 of the SUB, and tell a GAZETTE staff member what page of this week's GAZETTE the Crispy Crunch Bar is on and you'll receive a Crispy Crunch of your very own. Exciting, isn't it!?