

# Tricky Woo freak out

BY KATHERINE HEBB AND JEN CLEARY

At the beginning of each of their performances, Tricky Woo's four members "form a circle, hold hands, drop eleven hits of acid and scream "Freak out!" And freak out was exactly what they did last Friday night at the Marquee Club.

Members Andrew Dixon, Adrian Popvich, Patrick Conan, and Eric Larock travelled from their hometown of Montreal to headline the unveiling party of the Halifax On Music Festival. Their style of sixties garage rock n' roll was an acquired taste for some of the audience members at the Marquee, but those familiar with the band were very responsive to the music. One fan in particular couldn't help but head bang to the heavy guitar riffs, despite his immobilizing neck brace.

Their songs were short, loud and unoriginal, but their energy on stage made up for their lack of musical talent. Their reckless attitudes pumped fans with feelings of carelessness and mindless excitement.

Everybody who enjoyed the music felt it, yet I'm not sure they recognized precisely what they were feeling.

The bizarre behaviour of the lead singer and guitarist frightened some of the crowd. He involved the audience by jumping off the stage, getting down on his knees and burying his head under the shirts of his fans while still singing. Later he smashed his instruments as he laid down on the stage. The enthusiastic performance appealed to all of the crowd at the Marquee that night — if not for the music, then for pure entertainment value alone.

We caught up with the band after the show in a stale little room in the basement of the Marquee. We were a bit nervous to talk to them after such an unusual performance, but luckily their off stage behaviour was much more reserved. The interview was very laid back and the members were very friendly and easy going.

The release of Tricky Woo's second album, *The Enemy is Real*, marks the band's musical progression since the replacement of all

but one of the four-member group.

The band began their promising career in a boiler room of a commercial complex. Shortly after, they were signed to the Sonic Unyon record label, which also includes Frank Black and the Pixies. The band is greatly influenced by the music of the Rolling Stones and Led Zeppelin, which is where they get their 'dirty rock' appeal.

The band believes "their music is meant to be performed in a big amphitheatre or coliseum...and until that happens we're not going to stop".

When asked where they see themselves in ten years time, they sarcastically answered they would be "living off the wealth of the band with a lot of chicks and cocaine".

Tricky Woo is clearly a one-dimensional band. The band is solely driven by the passion for their music. Their lyrics don't offer much more than a castrated male donor at a sperm clinic, but in the words of Tricky Woo, they "just want to fucking rock."

## A Marvellous Night for Van Morrison

BY JOHANNES WHEELDON

You can expect a little of everything in the Halifax music scene, ranging from university circuit bands, numerous local acts and even top 40 extravaganzas like the Backstreet Boys.

And in recent years Halifax has become a venue for another type of rock spectacle — the old-timer rock tour. The tour has brought us such relics as Bob Dylan, Neil Young, and last year about 60 per cent of CCR to Halifax. This year's addition is 70s icon Van Morrison.

Morrison played an upbeat concert to a crowded yet polite Metro Centre on Monday. Considering Morrison reached the height of his success almost 30 years ago, the full house was impressive. The audience predictably consisted of lots of old hipsters, with a large showing from the younger generations as well.

Bathed in purple light, Morrison took the stage. Gone were the ponytail and bell bottoms — instead, they were replaced with a respectable yet stylish black suit and brimmed hat. Surrounded by his incredible band, Morrison belted out tune after tune for an hour and

forty-five minutes, changing decades and eras as easily as some change keys.

The Morrison experience is a soulful one. Jazzy melodies and blues riffs entwine with Morrison's famous rhythmic lyrics. While I'm not the biggest fan, I recognized my share of tunes (sorry, no "Brown Eyed Girl").

What I also noticed was Morrison's tight leash on his band. Sadly, each member soloed only when Morrison indicated. These guys really cook, and it's a shame they don't get a freer reign. But hey, Morrison's the one selling the tickets.

Though the set was seamless, the uniformity of the songs on the set list made me wonder how long the band had been playing. "Did he just change the lyrics to this one?" I asked myself. Of course not, yet the hour and forty five minutes of song blended a little too seamlessly. Don't get me wrong, I smiled throughout the evening — even if sometimes I couldn't tell the difference between the songs.

Morrison earned my respect with his honest and raw performance. Old time rockers sometimes fall short of expectation, but Van Morrison was a pleasant surprise.

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