

Progressive Rock wizards at York

The Spoons hit a brick wall

Joel Guthro
Perhaps the people dancing on stage could explain it. At a live concert, one expects to see musicians and audience fused in a mutual understanding of what is being presented. If the audience enjoys itself, the artist and their music have extracted something from them.

But the Spoons, at Burton Auditorium last Thursday, met with an audience that really didn't know how to react—the exception being the twenty-odd that danced through the concert.

The band has made a rapid entry into the music scene, spurred on by successful concerts and their recent agreement with A&M for international distribution of their new LP, *Artas and Symphonies*.

But bassist, Sandy Horne, feels the York concert reversed this trend, "Throughout Quebec and other parts of Ontario, we were warmly received, then bang, it's like we hit a brick wall."

Intimacy was definitely lacking. The Burton Auditorium environment



Photo: P.L. Noble

with its high ceiling and open spaces added to the distance between the Spoons and their listeners. But sit-down concerts may be a curse for the Spoons. Why stay in your seat when the music makes you feel good enough to dance?

After two songs, lead singer and guitarist, Gordon Deppe, invited everyone down to dance, which some

did for the next hour and a half. Unfortunately, this was only one of two times that any of the four band members even spoke to the audience; the Spoons remained as electronic and cool as their music. Very few people knew who the Spoons are and many still don't. They didn't welcome the crowd and the band members were never introduced.

The dancers stayed with it though, picking up some interesting rhythms from the 16-year-old Rob Preuss, a Bowiesque Man from Glad who added to Derrick Ross' strong drumming by transforming the keyboards into a percussion instrument. Some songs, however, droned on, failing to provide the energy required for such duration.

Other songs, such as *Nova Heart* and *Symmetry* had a "hook", which ensured that magical sound record executives rub their hands to.

It will be interesting to watch the progress of the Spoons. They certainly exude promising creativity and talent, but they should be wary of sit-down gigs, because those few moving on the improvised dance floor said it all.

The names have been changed to protect the guilty

After-hours Festival speakeasy

Joel Guthro
"Marty X" and "Phil Y", York University film alumni who are incognito for a good reason, wanted to create a new series for this year's Festival of Festivals.

There was a John Cassavetes and Gena Rowlands retrospective, a Brazilian and New Zealand series and even a Lothar Lambert special (Lothar who?). They approached Wayne Clarkson, the Festival director, with another idea—a "bizarre film" series. It was to be something a little different from a team of entrepreneurs of the same description.

"We wanted to screen off-beat films," explains Marty, "but we didn't receive the support."

Without Festival money, the series fell through. Undaunted, Marty and Phil concocted the Party Series—an illegal, after-hours bar with music, dancing and... bizarre films.

"No-one believed Festival people would be interested in screening additional films at three in the morning," Marty recalls, "but they were wrong."

Although these parties are illegal, Marty stays relatively calm; Phil, however, paces the hallways and scrutinizes the guests. "So we get busted," says Marty, shrugging his shoulders, "we'll take the rap. But I highly doubt they'd bust us, I mean, Festival people?"

Festival people who somehow look the same because they all try to look different: purple hair, gold glitter pants, minis galore and black, that mysteriously popular colour. Marty and Phil are buzzing around all morning—the only two who actually stand out in the star-studded crowd. They are unaffected by protocol and indifferent to the celebrities this year's Festival has dumped at their doorstep—people like Robert De Niro and Harvey Keitel.

There are some customers, however, who do catch their attention: undercover police officers. "If a couple of geeky guys walk in wondering if this is where it's happening, there's no way they'll get in."

The door is watched very closely and you must have a valid pass to get

in. "If the cops do bust in, they're more than welcome to free beers; after all, it's a private party." While the two hosts don't expect to see the law, they are reconciled to losing their money if they are closed.

So the insomniacs party all night, and then Marty and Phil clean up and go to bed just as the 9-to-5ers begin their day. It is an unusual approach to Festival fever and they're hoping Wayne Clarkson noticed them. "There's always next year," says Marty.

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