

The El Mocambo is a long way from the Reading Festival

by Leighton Shearer-Sonier

Scene one: a scorching day, late summer 1991. Fifty thousand rocking musos cram close to the stage. It's the Reading Festival and Thee Hypnotics are waking the dead and comatose.

Scene two: a dark club in Toronto. It's another meaningful event at Toronto's rock 'n' roll mecca, the El Mocambo: it's 20 below outside and 300 leather clad die-hards are scattered about the cavernous bar waiting for another pitcher of ale. Thee Hypnotics have a task of biblical proportions ahead of them.

On stage there is a sense of dissatisfaction. It is near impossible to write a serious, meaningful word concern-

CONCERT

Thee Hypnotics
El Mocambo
Tuesday, March 10

ing the worthless, retro-rock painfully acted out by Canada's own (sorry!) Swampbaby, a band still relying on Jim Morrison moves and early Rolling Stones riffs. They are a tantrum-ridden opening act of little innovation and no use.

Thee Hypnotics need to rock. By the end of their first song, a rip at "Preachin' and Ramblin'," you start to feel a little better about the whole evening.

Thee Hypnotics are not used to a crowd this size, although, to be fair,

they're not used to Reading Festival sized crowds either. A typical Thee Hypnotics crowd falls somewhere in between.

Drummer Will Pepper clarifies the unease and bad will as they leave the stage after a bumbling encore with a few well chosen words to the effect

that they haven't even been paid for the evening.

Bitching aside, how was the concert?

Thee Hypnotics borrow heavily from the same bands that Swampbaby steal from. The great thing about Thee Hypnotics is their context: they rock the small crowd with songs of the

retro-scene firmly rooted in 1990s grunge.

This concert is not their best, but no one can blame them. Theirs is the music of crammed halls and sweaty bodies which feeds off the crowd banging at the edge of the stage. Tonight they are just going through the motions the rocking Hypnotics way.

This Opera House gig a real hHead trip

by Leighton Shearer-Sonier

Toronto should be grunging themselves into oblivion with this band every night.

It's pretty late when hHead are finally introduced to the large crowd jammed into the smoke-filled Opera House. There have been a few renovations since I was last here: a prohibitive mosh barrier has been deemed a necessary addition to the stage, a decision hHead will pay for.

Because... hHead are the band Sub-Pop spawned. They are an amalgam

CONCERT

hHead
The Opera House
Monday, March 9

of every sound the Seattle grunge label ever produced, which isn't as bad as it sounds.

Leaning heavily on shaggy guitar riffs and funky slamming bass lines, this Toronto phenomenon-to-be created a set of power rivalling the

Mudhoney and Soundgarden of the world. Their songs are rich, strongly written and capable of creating a mosh-pit the size of a small farm, renovations or not.

"Burn," their finale, is the kind of song whole movements should be based on. To have a talented band like hHead roaring out of your own city is a luxury, to see them is an experience. Support them by buying their cassette, Toronto.

Excalibur, in conjunction with The Student Centre Corporation (bless their lovin' hearts), is giving away three pairs of tickets to see The Holly Cole Trio at the Underground on Wednesday, March 25. Be one of the first three people to come to the Excalibur office (420 Student Centre) Friday at noon and answer the following question: the bangs at the right belong to the lead singer of the Holly Cole Trio. Can you name him/her? Tell Eric (short guy, long hair) the answer and win.



York Dance Ensemble proves its versatility in Spring Dance '92

by Moira MacDonald

York dancers don't hibernate in winter: they burrow into their studios, wrapped in their warmest woolies while keeping the fires burning under a cauldron of creative activity. Last weekend they emerged, celebrating the imminent change of seasons with *Spring Dance '92* at the Betty Oliphant Theatre.

In keeping with the spring theme of rebirth, many of the show's works were re-creations, previously presented at other venues and re-worked to feature the talents of the York Dance Ensemble.

Christian themes were represented by three works, though each very different from the other.

Garnering the most attention in the Toronto dance community was York professor and master's candidate Anna Blewchamp. Her reconstruction of "The Wise Virgins," based on a biblical parable, was originally choreographed by Gwenyth Lloyd in 1942 for her Royal Winnipeg Ballet company. The ballet was all but lost after a fire destroyed the original notes, sets and costumes. Last

DANCE

Spring Dance '92
The York Dance Ensemble
The Betty Oliphant Theatre
March 14

year, Blewchamp took up the arduous task of reconstructing the ballet as part of her thesis, meeting with original cast members as well as Lloyd herself, now 91.

It's difficult to say how close the reconstruction came to the original, but it certainly stood on its own merits. The movement was fluid and classically grounded, although technically simple (if you disregard the sharply slanted rear floor, which must have been a dancer's nightmare). There was a need for clearer distinction in movement between the five wise virgins and the five foolish virgins, although this may have been part of the original work.

Darcey Callison's "Angelology" was a post-modern interpretation of the hierarchy of angels, portraying the qualities of guardian angels, imps and cherubs with more than a hint of how they all manifest themselves within earth-bound humanity. The dialogue included with the Meredith Monk soundtrack was distracting, however; a little less volume might have worked better.

Alvin Erasga Tolentino again proved himself as one of the Dance Department's major choreographic talents with "Sola Scriptura." It was seamless, danced with commitment by the choreographer himself. The movements may have been simple, but each yielded meaning, telling the story of a man's quest for spiritual purity.

Rounding out the non-religious part of the program were three other works. Voice as percussion was featured in both York Dance Ensemble director Holly Small's "Cheap Sunglasses" and Patrick Pennefather's "A Big Circle." Small's work was slick and athletic; Pennefather's was more a comic interlude consisting of dancers pacing about in small circles "wondering what to do, to do, to do."

Arwyn Carpenter's "Sang-Froid" was cleanly danced by several ensemble members. The work had an eerie theme: a frustrated male writer was likened to a vampire inducing his female muses to suck their own blood and offer it to him as creative inspiration.

The Dance Ensemble is a technically strong group, although lacking in virtuosity. They are artists with a strong sense of phrasing, musicality and expression, a solid base from which to improve.



York Dance Ensemble member Shelley-Ann Walker in Gwenyth Lloyd's *Wise Virgins*, as reconstructed by York professor and master's candidate Anna Blewchamp. *Wise Virgins* was one of the pieces performed by the Dance Ensemble for *Spring Dance '92*. • photo by Jack Liang



Moah Mintz, lead singer of the local band hHead strikes a typical rock and roll, kick out the stops guitar hero pose (if you discount the speaker trying to edge him out of the photo). And, the best part is, he's rumoured to be a York student. • photo by Alak Sharma

campus events calendar

"By All Means Painted," an exhibition of new works by Verna Linney and Petra Nyendick, will be featured in the Winters College Gallery (Main Floor, Winters College) until March 20. "The paintings in this exhibition are part of a continuing exploration of the interpenetrations between form and meaning," writes Linney. For more information, call extension 77618.

Works by visual artists Nick Threndyle and Mark Tumber will be exhibited in the Samuel J. Zacks Gallery (109 Stong College) until March 20. For more information, call extension 33055 or 77305.

British playwright Jim Cartwright's *Road* appears in the Atkinson Theatre until March 21. "Music and liquor supply the grease that turns the wheels of doom in this magnificently realistic view of a single road in Maggie Thatcher's England." Showtime is 7:30, with a 1 pm matinee Wednesday, March 18 and Friday, March 20. Admission: \$10, \$7 for students and seniors. Box office: 736-5157.

VOCAL EYES — *The Artist as Citizen*, the fifth annual Wendy Michener Symposium, will be presented by the Faculty of Fine Arts and Winters College March 18, from 2 to 4 pm in the Winter Senior Common Room 021. Poet, playwright, novelist and broadcaster M. T. Kelly chairs a discussion on the role and responsibilities of the artist in a society and culture. Panelists are journalist and arts critic Carole Corbeil; writer and television critic Brian Fawcett; curator of The Power plant Richard Rhodes; playwright, dramaturge and York theatre prof Judith Rudakoff; and actor/director R. H. Thompson. Admission is free. For more information, call 736-5136.

Clarinetist Susan Rehner performs in the Student Recital Series with a program of works by Poulenc, Weber and Simeonov. Dacary Hall, 050 McLaughlin. Thursday, March 19, 7:30. Admission is free.

Music students and faculty join in a continuous performance of improvised music in Dacary Hall from 1 to 4 pm on Friday, March 20. The highlight of the program will be John Zorn's "Cobra." Admission is free.

Also on Friday, March 20, Soprano Marie Piazza presents a program of works by Vaughan-Williams, Puccini, Villa Lobos, Handel and others. Dacary Hall — 8 pm. Admission is free. For more information on these three events, call the music department, 736-5186.