

Stamp your feet

# Post Office rocker delivers new single

Ian Pedley

Have you ever heard of "Shanghai Lil"? No? Well, it's not surprising. Have you ever heard of Dave Wallace? If you haven't you've probably seen him. Dave has worked in York's post office during the day

for the past seven years, but on the off hours has been involved in several musical projects--the latest being a band called--that's right--"Shanghai Lil".

Shanghai Lil is a progression from

bands Dave has worked on, including Shaker, a group which entered and won the Q107 Homegrown Contest two years ago. That gave them the opportunity to play the El Mocambo. The song that won the show, "Nirvana/Oh what a night", is featured on the b-side of their latest single, "A Flower and a Bee".

As with the El Mocambo contest, "A Flower and a Bee" was initiated and paid for by the band. Not a cheap hobby, but there's speculation about just how long it will remain a part-time thing. The single is a killer punch in a velvet glove. Featuring Dave Wallace on vocals, Oscar Savona on rhythm guitar, Greg Robichaud on lead, Elio Deciantis on bass and Bob Norrie on drums, "Flower and a Bee" is a pop-oriented song complete with catchy lyrics, thumping danceable bass, and some very smooth guitar work that could well make the song a hit if it gets the exposure it needs.

I talked with Dave and Oscar at their old stomping grounds, the Absinthe pub.

Excal: Where did you guys dig up a name like "Shanghai Lil"?

Dave: I saw a band called Gravel from Cleveland, and they did this

song called "Shanghai Lil". It was such a great song, like I still hum it. Oscar: It's also the name of a hooker from China.

Dave: --and all the sailors when they pulled into port in Hong Kong would be looking for her. In a way I think that represents us... wait... not that we are musical prostitutes, but she gave people a good time and hopefully our music can do the same thing.

Excal: Who writes the songs?

Dave: Oscar and I, with a little help from the rest of the guys. Oscar writes the music, I write the lyrics.

Excal: Right now, the band is part-time. Is it eventually going to turn into a full-time career?

Oscar: Well, right now we all have a family or whatever and we don't want this to be an inconvenience, but if something does click in...

Excal: Perhaps the new single will do that.

Dave: We hope so. I think we're only touching the tip of the iceberg right now.

Excal: Has the band any kind of financial support or backing?

Dave: You're looking at the backing--we all contribute. Everything we have done, we've done ourselves. The Homegrown thing--we went with every intention of winning and we did. We decided to do this new song and we didn't care how long it takes or how expensive it gets. The band has been the nucleus of everything that has happened. No one has really done much for us.

Excal: Where can people pick up the new single?

Dave: Records on Wheels in Richmond Hill, or if anyone wants to buy a stamp, come and see me on my lunch break.

Excal: Has York been any help to you?

Dave: York's been good to me. I like the environment and the people are good. Music is the number one thing I want to do, but if it's not full-time, I'm happy working here.

Excal: Is there anything you would like to say to anyone reading this thing?

Dave: Yeah! Buy the record.



Photo: Richard Beckstead

Shanghai Lil is post office worker's hobby.

York theatre festival

## Waiting for Beckett

J. Brett Abbey

The plays of Samuel Beckett normally require the viewer to alter his/her perceptions of life, to fully appreciate the experience. Some Beckett work's even go so far as to ruthlessly demand it.

It was attempted however, at York this past week in the Samuel Beckett Theatre in Stong College. Two selected plays entitled *Endgame* and *Waiting for Godot* were presented at the "Beckett At Beckett" festival. Both productions illustrated our lack of appreciation for life, and demonstrated as the playwright said that "the end is in the beginning, yet you go on..."

*Endgame*, directed by fourth-year theatre student, Brian Scott, examined the daily routines and patterns of life which we see too late to change. It is on this dull, inactive sense of living that director Scott has focused York's dragged-out, lengthy production.

While the play did deliver its message, it was spoken in too peaceful a tone of voice. There was a lack of energy and a senseless carrying on by the cast. The main character, Hamm, played by Eric Trask, did at times show the meaninglessness of habitual actions. Generally, however, his spoken lines seemed artificial and anticipated. This prevented the audience from believing in the characterization.

Clov, played by Kristie Cough did manage to show how we drag ourselves through life by sliding, not walking through the production and speaking her lines slowly. Yet, she also succumbed to the lifeless drawl of the moment, by slipping out of character. The performers' abilities to realize Beckett's view of life are not to be blamed solely on their acting skills. The failure may be due to their limited experience in life.

Almost two hours long without an intermission, *Endgame* leaves the audience run-down, waiting on an end that never comes. This production subtly slaps the audience on the wrist. Beckett would have knocked the audience to the ground.

*Waiting for Godot* was directed

by theatre student, Robert Holmes, with a more light-hearted approach to the presentation of Beckett's work. The play is based on the notion of waiting for someone or something. Holmes has directed the two main characters, Vladimir and Estragon, as a comic duet rather than as the pathetically dull men they seem. Most of their opening conversations come across as a humorous half-wit dialogue for the audience. They win audience approval and laughter. However, it is not until the arrival of Pozzo, played by Albert Schultz, that the play re-energizes. Schultz's Pozzo, as an arrogant, egotistical ruler, revives a now lifeless audience with his incredible stage presence.

On the whole, both productions seemed to have served their purpose. *Endgame* and *Waiting for Godot* were performed for more than four hundred people over the course of five days, and might well have managed to plant a seed, that when fertilized will give people the desire to take a long hard look at themselves and the life they're leading.

Unfortunately, the productions did not nurture the seed Beckett had hoped to grow. The blame, however, does not and should not rest entirely on these student-run productions. According to the Front of House staff at both shows, only one theatre professor was seen at the festival. Perhaps, York theatre needs more interaction between students and professors.

EXCALIBUR  
NEEDS  
PEOPLE WITH  
EVEN TEMPER.

scattering leaves shiver skeletally and shudder from my feet : a shiver-rippled October pond.

Laurie Kruk

i couldn't sleep last night my bed empty as a vacuum sucked clean even of cold: under flatiron blankets i was planted-- a sterile seed.

Laurie Kruk

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