

SNFU off to Europe; plays final farewell gig

S.N.F.U.
Multi-Purpose Rumpus Room
Friday, October 28

review by Ron Kuipers

SNFU played a final gig before leaving for their European tour Friday night, and again they showed the audience the reason for their



SNFU's Ken Chin (Chi Pig) entertains hardcore crowd at the Multi-Purpose Rumpus Room.

growing success and popularity. It is easy for Edmonton's SNFU fans to take the band for granted. It's like seeing Gretzky play for the Oilers so often; after a while you become used to high quality performance. This really hit home when, travelling in Ottawa, people I met would say things like, "you're lucky you get to see a band like SNFU all the time." I didn't even think of it before and upon reflection agreed, "Yeah, I am."

This particular show reminded me of Edmonton's earlier hardcore age — those all but lost days when all-age gigs occurred frequently. It seemed as if the ghost of the old Spartans Mens Hall was present at this concert. All the right elements were there: a young, frenzied, wall-to-wall crowd, and some of the best hardcore (for want of a better word) music around. And the band played "Womanizer", the one song that put them on the hardcore map, as well as many other well-weathered songs like "Misfortune" and "Bodies in the Wall".

But the band didn't just stick to these old favorites, and that is one of the reasons for their relatively large success. They are always trying out new songs on the audience, and it is evident from these new songs that the band's sound and musical

ability continue to evolve, and, as hinted at earlier, this carries them beyond the boundaries of simple hardcore music. As a matter of fact, songs like "The Quest for Fun" are downright danceable.

You never know what to expect from an SNFU concert except one thing, entertainment. The lead singer, Ken Chin (otherwise known as Mr. Chi Pig), just goes nuts. That's the only way to describe him. He shows a remarkable trust in his audience as he lets them carry him away from the stage and return him to it. The band's show depends on this kind of

audience-performer connection, and though Ken remains the focal point of the band, the rest of the members are also energetic and entertaining.

SNFU have yet to fail in unleashing a performance of power and fury, and as long as that remains the case they will continue to be a vital part of Edmonton's alternative music scene. Their blend of originality, vitality, and sheer fun will carry them a long way, and what for the time being is Edmonton's loss, is Europe's gain.

Broken glass no obstacle for Webb

Brian Webb solo dance
John L. Haar Theatre
October 28

review by Rosa Jackson

Brian Webb's 10th anniversary season opener, *Go On Go On Go On*, was an unusual mix of modern dance, modern music and modern art. While Webb demonstrated a certain amount of courage and innovation in his solo performance, it was his use of props rather than the dance itself which held the audience's interest for the majority of the show.

Webb's first and best number was "Bone White Time", an intriguingly dramatic

Webb rolled
across the broken
glass...

piece. The sculptures which made up the set were striking: four stark white nude women, one wearing a black veil; and grotesque metallic masks perched on a large area of broken glass. Webb, dressed in white, flirted with the "women" while maintaining an air of cold detachment. His movements were smooth and controlled, but forceful.

At the climax of the piece, Webb rolled across the broken glass as luxuriously as if he were on a featherbed. There was not a sound in the auditorium as he did this other than the eerie tinkling of breaking glass. This was the most impressive of Webb's repertoire of moves, and might have been even more effective had he saved it for last. As it was, the remainder of the show seemed lacking in comparison.

The second piece, "Tsunami", was suitably spooky for a Hallowe'en show. It began with Webb standing barechested, holding a clock which said midnight under one arm and pointing at the sky with the other. He wore sunglasses and his face bore a cheeky grin. Over the new age synthesizer sounds composed by Los Angeles' Douglas Loveid, a voice declared: "Let there be no dance... let there be no strange cries of excitement." Then, out of Webb's mouth popped a ping-pong ball full of sparkles.

This number had a few other witty

moments, such as when Webb wrapped himself in a green garden hose and threatened to spray the audience with it, then sprayed himself. There were also some interesting props; a two dimensional unicorn, and tennis balls which fell from the sky. Unfortunately, Webb's dancing was overshadowed by all this; it was less colorful than the scenery. He excelled at moves which required strength, but was weaker at those which required flexibility.

The show's second half was more serious, and less entertaining, than the first. It opened with "Fast Driving Rain" which, to Phil's re-creation of Beethoven's *Pathétique*, portrayed a man held captive by his environment. His stiff walk, the bandage which enveloped his head, and the one-room apartment setting all symbolized the restrictions placed upon him. As the pace of the show picked up, the confines were removed; Webb peeled off the bandage, and nearly all his clothes. The number concluded with Webb climbing out of a window, presumably onto a rooftop, and running in circles in his

...his face bore a
cheeky grin...

underwear.

Webb's last piece, "Bohater", was his most bizarre. As the curtain opened, he stood, still in his underwear, with a long red coat and black boots laid out in front of him. After some reflection, he put on his boots, then crawled head first into the coat. Once in costume, he paced around a box of light on the stage, conveying a mood of futility and hopelessness reminiscent of a character in a desolate Russian play.

The music for this piece, by Edmonton composer George Arasimowicz, could be described as "20th century classical." Webb's interpretation was disturbing rather than uplifting, and left the audience with something to think about.

While Webb's dancing is powerful, his strength is in his ability to convey characters and atmosphere. His bravery must be admired; very few dancers could pull off a solo show, and even less could dance with confidence wearing only their underwear.

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