

# The Best/Worst of 94

## THINGS THAT WERE COOL IN '94

### Halifax Pop Explosion

Where else can you get five straight days of indie rock, a special performance by one of the Kids In The Hall and get whacked in the head with a skateboard? Well, okay lots of places, but Halifax's second annual festival ranks up there with the best of them. Get out your flannel, baggy pants and purple hair dye.

### Dooly's

Pool playing in general has taken off in Freddy in a big way but Dooly's, though a bit on the high-price-tag side, has the nicest tables and straightest cues I've ever played with. The price of a soda could come down a tad though.

### Mexi's (or Mexicali Rosa's for those not in the know)

Yum, yum. Fajitas, margaritas, nachos, chimichangas, enchiladas, deep fried ice cream.... a great place to go on a date. Very busy and social.

### Dimitri's

Still Fredericton's reigning champ for an ethnic restaurant. It's comfortable, service is prompt and pleasant and the food is delicious. However, lots of garlic makes it the place for a second or third date only.

### Gallery Bistro

If you want to really impress someone, this is the place. It's tiny and intimate and desserts rule. Very cosy. New art on the walls every so often guarantee that as long as you don't eat there too often, it's a different place every time.

### Café du Monde

Great coffee and great desserts. Very sociable atmosphere with small but temptuous menu. Right off the street so having your friends join you as they walk by is usually an unexpected pleasure.

### Sarah McLachlan at The Playhouse

Not quite as good as last time, but just as enjoyable and pleasant. Excellent show with great band and superlative light show. Only drawback: Our Lady Peace, playing on the same night opening for 54:40, had to be missed.

### Big Sugar at The Exchange

A second night, though unexpected, was filled to capacity on the word of the previous night's sold out show. Intimate and warm, the blues of all shades were performed with perfection by Canada's newest blues king.

### Sun Prince

One of THE best Oriental restaurants to go to. The restaurant is small, but the food is excellent, the service friendly and the prices reasonable for the amount of food you get.

### Kurt's Dance Warehouse

Fredericton's alternative dance bar scene, boasting a diverse group of people. The atmosphere is pleasant, the staff friendly, and the music will have you moving to the beat.

### Capitol Film Society

Their best season yet in great films and artsy-type cinema. On the up side, some films are super long for extra bang for your buck (student rates are cheapcheapcheap). On the down side, these long films have to be endured in the theatre with the most uncomfortable seats ever designed. It's not over yet, second half of the season is still on its way, bringing with it....

### Exotica

Atom Egoyan's masterpiece. Sexy and steamy but pensive and thought-provoking, this film earned every award it has won and will undoubtedly continue to win. Don't miss it at the Capitol Film Society this April.

### Natural Born Killers

Quentin Tarantino's (Pulp Fiction, Reservoir Dogs) screenplay and Oliver Stone's all-over-the-place direction genuinely capture the mayhem and madness that hang over the characters of Mickey and Mallory. Loaded with political and media satire and commentary, this film is a serious reality check for people who are really into TV culture. Won't be the same on video so kick yourself if you decided to wait.

### Pulp Fiction

If you haven't seen it, do whatever it takes because no description will do it justice. If you have seen it, you know what I mean. Quentin Tarantino's springboard away from the critics' characterisations of depraved violence into high cinematic art. You'll never hear Ezekiel in the same way again. "May I have a sip of your tasty beverage to wash down this delicious burger?"

### The Beatles "Live at the BBC"

Okay, okay. It's the Beatles. What else can I say? There is something about hearing them playing together at roughly my own age that makes me love this album. It's old American 50's rock played by a bunch of Brits but it really is fun unlimited. Shows their sense of humour the best of any of their releases.

### Moist "Silver"

Here's an album that really is new. They're not that original, but they don't sound like anyone else I can think of either. An indie record that proves itself in two songs. In fact, it proves itself so well, EMI signed it after it had already been released as an indie product. Shows how much the record companies are in touch with the world today.

### Vangelis "Blade Runner" Original Soundtrack

This twelve year old film finally releases its soundtrack and it still sounds fresh. Electronic music so ahead of its time that the twelve years just dissolve away as the first notes begin. Production quality is also top notch and very comparable to anything recorded and produced today. Makes you wonder why they waited so long.

### Beastie Boys "Ill Communication"

How could you make it through 1994

without this record? It has teenage angst, afterschool rerun rebellion, streetwise advice and good wholesome non-toxic fun all wrapped into one. More than just rap, it's jazz, it's funk, it's soul, it's punk, it's out-of-control. It's a great party album. Nuff Said!

### Veruca Salt "American Thighs"

We have seen the future of indie rock and it ain't the testosterone-ridden boys-only club of Pearl Jam or the terminally angry estro-fest of L7. Mixed gender groups are "it" and Veruca Salt are out to make you Rawk! While not the modern rock gods that Rolling Stone makes them out to be, their album is definitely solid. It will undoubtedly be heard on UNB only until it is safe, or until Gord Downie is seen on stage wearing a Veruca Salt t-shirt, whichever comes first.

### Tori Amos "Under The Pink"

As angry as Courtney Love but with the ability to express it as eloquently as Kate Bush, Tori Amos comes out with her second record that is not as moody as her last, and for some reason, less accessible. Bolder, weirder and much more cerebral than "Little Earthquakes", she is very deep, but very down to earth in every interview. She is a very important artist that manages not to take herself too seriously. Her music, yes; herself, no.

## THINGS THAT SUCKED IN '94

### The proliferation of Cellular Phones

What could be so important that someone feels the need to be on the phone at an intersection or while at the mall? Get a grip. If you have been sucked into this ultimate symbol of western decadence, our condolences go to your family, co-workers and anyone else within earshot.

### Incredibly vacant media analyses of Kurt Cobain's suicide

He was the guitar player of a band. Some people say a good band. As for being spokesperson for our entire generation...yeah, right. Are they trying to say we are an entire nation of tone deaf, gun collecting manic depressives? It should be interesting to see if Kurt posthumously becomes the marketable commodity he so desperately wanted Nirvana to avoid becoming. The boomers have proved that nothing, but nothing sells records like dead rock stars.

### Kurt Cobain's suicide note

As devoid of thought and sincere emotion as the media who attempted to dissect it. Courtney always said he had a flair for the melodramatic.

### Gregorian Chants

"Wow! Enigma without that annoying drum beat!" - actual quote

### Ace of Base "The Sign"

Swedish reggae? What the hell is this? Am I the only who doesn't get this? The appeal of banal lyrics based around a woman's desire to conceive a child are beyond me. Plus she sings flat. Next.

### Reunion tours/albums by washed up rock stars in their twilight years

"The Eagles are getting back together just for the fans." Tickets were only \$130 US. Plus parking. Robert Plant and Jimmy Page have decided now is the time to get creative again. Unfortunately, that means getting creative with old Zeppelin classics. Guess that limits your options, huh? It's good to know Pink Floyd are still out there pushing the envelope. Funny how you can still hear "Comfortably Numb" near the end of every show. The Rolling Stones seem to be well preserved too. Must be on the same plan as Dick Clark.

### Pearl Jam hype

They are a band. That's it. Nothing more. Calm down.

### Chris Sheppard's DJ set in Halifax

Get off the mic, Chris! Nobody cares! Do a little less coke and a little more mixing. Maybe people will dance then. I can't remember the last time I actually stopped dancing at a club, turned to the person next to me and said "This music sucks!", but I can bet you it has been a long time. All hype, no substance. I have honestly heard better music in Newcastle.

### True Lies

You know, I can never get enough car chases, explosions, gunfights, brawls, strip-teasing, adolescent male masturbational fantasies for my money. I would rather have watched "Ishtar". Again.

### Sweetwaters

New music once every thirty minutes

(see Ace of Base), a drink spilled on you once every three minutes, drunk losers circling the dance floor all night (yes, there is a dancefloor), ration cards taken at par with beer tickets...hey, what more could you ask for? A bar that in its attempt to appeal to everyone, appeals to no one. More of a meat market than the place directly across the street.

### World Cup Final

After an amazing month on great games (all broadcast in prime time) and individual performances, Italy's star player misses the goal altogether to lose to Brazil. Not just kept out by the goalie, but misses the goal altogether. (cue sad music) A humiliating ending to an otherwise exciting game.

### The Lion King

See the film, buy the book, squeeze the plush toys, listen to Elton John, see the film again at Xmas, interact with CD-ROM, drink the soft drink, get the Burger King kids meal with special collectors toy, buy the soundtrack and then, and only then, will you be ready to rent it when it comes out on video. Then repeat process again.

### Star Trek: Generations

Kirk dies. Surprise! Well, he wasn't immortal, you goofs! Trying to take Patrick Stewart seriously on the same screen as William Shatner was too much to ask of even the Trekkies. Basically, I spent \$5 to finally see the set for Stellar Cartography. At least it wasn't as bad as "Ishtar". Thank goodness it is the last film featuring the original 60's TV cast. I don't think they could have squeezed Scotty into the wardrobe fitting room, let alone into a nother costume.

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