

Film Reviews

Star-studded Sleepers a must-see

SHELLEY MORELL
THE BRUNSWICKAN

I hate to use the word "wow" but I can't really think of another one to sum up the newly released movie *Sleepers*. This movie, based on a true story written by Lorenzo Carcaterra, is deep and even somewhat disturbing. It's deep enough to make you cry and clench your feet in anger.

The movie begins in a tiny town called Hell's Kitchen. It's hometown to four young boys- Mickey, Shakes, Tommy and John- who spend their days causing trouble. On one particular day they steal a hot dog cart from a vendor and inadvertently end up killing him with it. The boys go to court and are sentenced to one year at the Wilkinson Home for Boys, an institute that will change their lives forever.

Father Bobby, played by Robert DeNiro, is the only stable figure they have in their lives; however even father Bobby can't save them from the sexual and emotional abuse they endure.

These young boys are tortured every day by drunk and stoned guards from their cell block. Nokes, played by Kevin Bacon, is the key player as the story unfolds. I don't think I've ever left a

movie hating Kevin Bacon, but there's a first time for everything I suppose. These boys eventually become men and a whole new side to the story evolves. Nokes is spotted by John and Tommy about ten years later in a bar. As they're still "bad-to-the-bone", if you will, they kill Nokes for all the abuse he inflicted on them as young boys.

This where it starts to get really good. A trial ensues with plot twists and intrigue. It would be spoiling it if I told you the end.

This is an amazing movie with an amazing cast. Dustin Hoffman, yet again, is fabulous. Jason Patric, Brad Pitt, Robert DeNiro- they're all great actors with suiting characters.

What I found quite beneficial to this movie was that I read the book beforehand. For you readers, this is a great idea. It helps to show the accuracy of the film. Everything from the book's dialogue to little things that the boys remembered as children were there. They didn't seem to miss a thing.

This is definitely a "two thumbs up." If you're going to see a movie this month be sure to take your date to Barry Levinson's *Sleepers*. If you can't get a date then go anyway. It's worth it, really.



Every single town in Canada has at least a few bands - most will never make it outside their city limits (and rightfully so), but there are a few who do make it beyond being a local band. And then fame and large amounts of money are the next stop - simple as that. Yet some cities seem to breed more than their fair share of real talent; Liverpool, Glasgow, New York, Seattle. Umm, maybe we can ignore that last one, but you get the idea.

My point is that there are cities in Canada that seem to have lots of good bands, and on the evidence of Ottawa City Speedway, it would seem that we can add Ottawa to that list (if you are willing to overlook/include dear sweet Alanis). This compilation features two tracks from each of twelve bands. And the bands include some very familiar names like Furnaceface, Punchbuggy, Jimmy George and Wooden Stars contributing (for the most part) new songs. The other bands might be less well-known, but they are still pretty decent - Black Boot Trio and Polaris! are the obvious stand outs. The only problem is that Ottawa bands don't seem to offer any real surprises - apart from a slight Celtic influence in places, everything seems to be of the punky, guitar variety. Still, as a document of a current scene, Ottawa City Speedway does a good, if predictable, job.

Vancouver's Nettwerk Records, in my most humble opinion, seem to spend way too much time thinking about how best to market Sarah McLachlan, and that means that most of their other releases seem to slip out almost unnoticed. Take The Grassy Knoll - their debut album sneaked out

last year, and despite being well-received critically, nobody seemed to notice. Now, maybe I can't blame Nettwerk for that, but if they tried giving it a little bit of a push, it may have got the attention it deserved. Hopefully that will be the case with Positive, the band's second album, as it is even better than it's predecessor. The quick analysis of how it sounds is that it has a real jazzy sound (thanks to some nifty trumpet work) combined with an electronic backing and a whole bunch of samples - the easy way out would be to call it trip-hop, but that would just be too easy. So instead, I will mention the likes of Miles Davis, Jah Wobble, Public Enemy (just to show I read the press release), and say that it sounds funky. The song titles continue the conspiracy theory theme ('Black Helicopters', 'Roswell Crash' and so on), but seem to have little to do with the actual music; don't be misled. Next time you get the urge to pick up another album just because of one new Sarah track, be a little adventurous and try The Grassy Knoll instead.

Everything is not perfect at Nettwerk



despite the fact that they do seem to be taking more chances of late. But sometimes those chances just don't pay off, and that is true of The Tear Garden's first record in four years. The Tear Garden is a collection of people from other bands (Skinny Puppy, The Legendary Pink Dots, Dead Voices On Air and so on), with the dominant force being the members of the Pink Dots. To Be An Angel Blind, The Crippled Soul Divide (such a catchy title, isn't it?) has a bit of a psychedelic feel to it, but it is mixed up with so many other influences that it isn't quite as interesting as it should be. And then the songs are long. When there simply are not enough ideas to fill a seven minute song, the last three minutes can be excruciating. That doesn't mean that there aren't some decent moments on here ('Cyberspider' and a few others stand out), but really this record is a bit of a gothic nightmare which could end up being an acquired taste for some. But not for me.

Meanwhile at 4AD Records, things are getting really weird. Gone are the days when every single band on the label had that ethereal sound; these days 4AD is probably more eclectic than most similarly sized labels. And if you need proof of this eclecticism, try out Million Mile Club by The Paladins for size. Million Mile Club is, as far as I can remember, 4AD's first ever blues release, and it is a rather good album too. Once you get past the initial shock

at what exactly is coming out of your speakers, you can begin to appreciate it for what it is - some straight-forward blues, all recorded live while the band were on tour earlier this year. They have a pretty full sound considering they are a three-piece, with Dave Gonzalez's guitar solos dominating the songs (most of which are covers). And however cliched it sounds, the best thing about Million Mile Club is the overall feeling of it all. I suppose that the blues really do live deep down inside.

As for Dead Can Dance, it is just more of the same. Mind you, that isn't necessarily a bad thing as they do such a good job taking all kinds of world music influences and blending them into something so very palatable. And that is the thing that is so very true of the past few Dead Can Dance albums - they are infinitely listenable, and thoroughly pleasant. Spiritchaser continues that grand tradition by being just as good as anything they've done to date, and therein the previously mentioned problem - it is just more of the same. To be honest, it sometimes gets hard to tell the difference between one of their albums and another. The majority of Spiritchaser uses the same Middle Eastern influences that turned up on Into The Labyrinth, and that alone makes it sound very similar. Still, it makes good background music but I fear that the innovative days of Dead Can Dance are behind them. Still, that doesn't mean we can't enjoy what's left.

Mag Reviews

Canadian lesbian magazine arrives

THE BRUNSWICKAN

It is of particular interest that the lesbian community is starting to be recognized as a relevant and marketable commodity in the business world. The gay dollar is increasingly of prime importance to companies around the world. For example, in Canada studies report significantly higher disposable income within the lesbian community, and businesses are responding. As a way of communicating this particular group's interests, magazines have taken to advertising with homosexual/bisexual content. However, for the most part magazines (especially lesbian ones) with Canadian content have been sorely lacking.

In its debut as a national magazine, FAB (short for fabulous) is supposed to advance Canadian lesbian lives in a positive manner. The central themes of this magazine are lifestyle, health, entertainment, travel, general information, fashion and humour. This isn't a political or militant magazine, but a way of delivering Canadian lesbian issues in an upbeat and fresh medium. FAB is the progressive development of the Toronto-based fab publication that informed and entertained the Toronto lesbian scene in the past few years. Published bimonthly as a national magazine, FAB contains an assortment of advertisements, news concerning lesbians with insights into lesbian lives, and a host of other issues.

Perhaps the most interesting subject with this magazine, is its focus on a positive attitude in spite

of the numerous negativisms that underscores the lesbian community. As the publishers of the magazine have stated in The Toronto Star, "FAB's content is upbeat and fresh...[it] will leave the politics and anger to those publications that have built their reputations on it." (The Toronto Star, September 12, 1996). The central tenets of this publication have remained true to form with colourful images, informative yet tasteful content and well-written articles. Yet, the one critique I do have; the lack of a more egalitarian provision of gay men, lesbian and bisexual information. Most of the articles, albeit concerning homosexuals and bisexuals as well, deal predominantly with gay/bisexual men. The images and advertisements also fall under this sphere. Nevertheless, FAB appears to be an excellent Canadian magazine for the homosexual/bisexual community. I would look forward to the next issue when it comes out...so to speak.



Chuck's Movie Picks for Halloween '96

Halloween is approaching fast, and in the spirit of the festive season I let my brain marinate and come up with five movies which would make your All Hallow's Evening most memorable. While they may not win any awards for plot, special effects, or acting they're Chuck's Movie Picks for Halloween '96.

Best Independently Made Horror Film - The Grim Reaper Stalks

Starring: Abby Teed, Donnie Cormier, Charles Teed
This classic horror flick has it all; a great soundtrack (keyboards), excellent special effects (spaghetti, ketchup, and playdough) and an amazing plot (plot? What plot? This is a horror film damnit!). One of the actresses in the film even went on to a lucrative film career (at Blockbuster Video). A must (not) see!!!

Scariest Non-Horror Film - How The West Was Fun

Starring: Mary-Kate and Ashley Olsen
If you can put up with two hours of the Olsen twins without having nightmares, you are a better man than I.

Humorously Bad Horror Film - Killer Bats

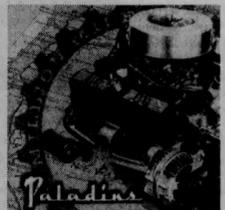
Starring: Bela Lugosi
My parents made me watch this when I was a kid. Wow! Is that a bat with web shooting capabilities a la Spider Man? No, just a string that keeps the obviously fake bat airborne. Wow! Human looking robots!!! No, bad actors with monotone voices. Great for hours of making fun of your parents and the "good old days".

Grossest Horror Film - A Nightmare on Elm Street Part 4

Starring: Robert Englund
Okay, so this isn't the grossest film I have ever seen (Hellraiser takes that prize) but this one has a personal story behind it. I watched this while eating pizza at a party with some friends, and all of a sudden there was a scene with a pizza with people's faces on it in the form of meatballs. Freddy eats one of the screaming faces (meatballs) and everyone at the party loses their appetite except me and my cast iron stomach, and I continue to eat the pizza to the disgust of my friends. Pretty funny, eh?

Horror Film With Social Commentary - Carrie

Starring: Sissy Spacek
The moral of this story: Don't make fun of those different than you. They might use their telekinetic powers to burn down your school and wreak havoc on your town. (There would certainly be hell to pay if I had telekinetic powers...)



"PETER PUMPKIN HEAD": This pumpkin-man creation proudly poses for a Halloween photograph. He is giving out sticks this year instead of candy. The kids don't like him.

Some solid reasons to work for The Bruns
(Entertainment, of course)

- Beat the Christmas rush - shop at The Bruns-Mart!
- It's getting cold out there, and the heat in here is free.
- You can talk to nationally renowned entertainment figures without fear of prosecution.
- Lots and lots of money. (Disclaimer: That is not true.)
- Your parents will let you stay up a whole extra hour on weeknights.
- And most importantly,

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