

ARTS

Cool sounds of 54-40 captivate concert goers

BY PAUL SMITH

54-40 ARE COOL. Perhaps a little too cool. Whereas singer-guitarist Neil Osborne seems to have difficulty smiling, he appears to have none at all with providing audiences with silly, rock'n'roll star poses. Never the less, 54-40's music does have something to offer people, and they proved this last Wednesday at the McInnes room.

Music
54-40
McInnes Room

54-40 played through an hour and a half long set of old and new material for the semi-lively crowd gathered to see them. Their very distinctive brand of alternative-pop

characterised the night from which they played some very hopeful sounding new songs to be released on their new album coming out in October. The band's tight, clear sound compounded with their simple, catchy riffs is an asset which makes them one of the most consistent and promising acts to break into the Canadian mainstream music scene in the past five years. Unfortunately, their live show does not meet up to the same standards. What energy they do seem to have on stage appears almost planned and slightly pretentious. However, where 54-40's live show falters, their music keeps them afloat. Hopefully the new album in October will only help to boost their musical credibility.

Halifax locals, Black Pool, put on a good opening show with an

impressive showcase of new and old material. Their lack of presence onstage is also a serious setback to their live performance, and an unfortunate one, as their blend of free flowing guitar riffs mixed with strong melodies shows a lot of promise.

One last note for concert goers; if you are standing near the stage at a concert do not be surprised if people step on your toes or accidentally bump you. It is because they are dancing and are trying to enjoy themselves. If you happen to be one of the people with their toes being stepped on, do not complain about it or make a scene; join them! Dancing is hip! If you are very intent on not dancing then just take a place farther away from the stage and enjoy the music.



Fear and loathing with Crash vegas.



54-40 or fight Mr. Roosevelt?

Grawood Vegas-style

BY ARAN MCKITTRICK

THE OPENING OF this year's "Grawood No Cover Concert Series" got off to a great start Friday night with the enticing riffs and rhythms of the Hamiltonian quartet, Crash Vegas. Led by the awe-inspiring lead vocalist Michelle McAdorey, the band performed an original blend of songs reflecting their jazz, punk, folk and southern rock influences.

MUSIC
Crash Vegas
Grawood

The crowd, though meagre in number and low in spirit, were fairly receptive and after several songs and a bit of enticement from McAdorey began to develop a feel for the music. Many amongst the crowd began to sing along with

McAdorey or mimic her eccentric dance style, as she moved with great emotion around the stage.

Within the short sixty minute set they did play, the band performed a selection of songs including Bury Her, Sky and Inside Out from their debut album Red Earth. With minimal encouragement from the crowd, which included a flurry of bottle banging, the band returned to the stage for an additional thirty minutes playing several R and B style tunes such as Julia Rain and Avalanche as well as a captivating cover of Neil Young's Down to the Wire.

Overall Crash Vegas put on an entertaining show! With Michelle McAdorey at centre stage, the crowd never lost interest in the band or the music they were playing. It was well worth the time spent waiting to get a seat!

Hear and Now compilation showcases local artists

BY MATTHEW MURPHY

AS A RESULT of the *Hear and Now* festival held this summer, a compilation CD and cassette of various local artists will be available at record stores this November.

The ten artists appearing on the album (including Sloan, Aimless and Rose Vaughn) were chosen from forty-five submissions. Four finalists received free recording time at Sound Market Recording Studio. The festival, funded by CKDU, DTK Records and Sound Market Recording Studio, was open to any independent musical artists who cared to send in a tape of themselves before June 1, 1991.

MUSIC
Hear and Now
Compilation of local artists

There were six judges who represented various aspects of the local music industry. They chose the bands, first and foremost, on the basis of originality and secondly on the performance of the song considered.

Many of the bands could not afford to record their songs with more than a four track recorder, if that. Therefore, the focus lay upon the actual songs' merit and potential for development in a sixteen track studio.

While the judges worked towards a consensus, some of the bands

were given the opportunity to play at the short lived alternative music club - Waldo's. In mid-August, once the ten artists had been chosen. The four finalists, Weasel-face Judge, Rose Vaughn, Sloan and Leonard Conan, played at the McInnes Room at Dalhousie with MCA recording artists Black Pool.

This past weekend Terry Pulliam at Sound Market began recording the finalists for the album. Pulliam has an impressive background in radio broadcasting both as a producer and sound technician. He now runs Sound Market recording Studio which operates out of his Agricola St. home.

Beside free hot dogs, coffee and

a fat cat to pet, the studio has excellent facilities and "socialist pricing according to your means," he said. He estimates that he has invested three thousand dollars worth of his time into the *Hear and Now* project. It was initiated as a way of promoting both his studio and independent local bands. For this reason, those who needed to re-record their material did so for free at his studio.

Working in conjunction with the *Hear and Now* Festival has been Doug Barron, better known as former local disc-jockey Hal Harbour. He is presently producer in charge of independent music for CFNY Radio in Toronto.

According to Pulliam, Barron is enthusiastic about the great variety and originality the festival has extracted from the area and wants to funnel more Atlantic Canadian music to the whole of Canada.

Beside the experience of working in a decent recording facility, the bands will benefit from the exposure they will receive from such a project. The very least this compilation of jazz, folk, rock and rap, could do is bring de facto recognition of the region's musical integrity.

The album will be sent through North American college radio circuits (including CKDU) and also to regional record stores.