

# ENTERTAINMENT

...music...films...exhibitions...theatre...arts...

## THE NATURE OF THINGS



I Mother Earth, consisting of Christian Tanna, Jagori Tanna, Bruce Gordon and Edwin, are playing the SUB cafeteria on Tuesday, February 11.

(EDITOR'S NOTE: The quotations in this article are from an interview that took place last July in Saint John, NB. All the information is still relevant, but an update on I Mother Earth will appear in next week's Brunswickan.)

PETER J. CULLEN

THE BRUNSWICKAN

Five minutes into a conversation with him and it's obvious where a primary source of I Mother Earth's drive and passion stems from. Jagori Tanna, the band's guitarist and main resource for the music, confesses to being a music purist and a dedicated musician, qualities that have drawn tremendous attention towards the band's latest album, *Scenery and Fish*.

The band, which signed with EMI after playing only 12 live shows, quickly became popular in Canada with their debut album, *Dig*. Consequently, the group claimed the Best Hard Rock Album title at the 1994 Juno Awards, beating out lifelong idol Rush in the process. Almost immediately after the honours, IME were called upon to open for Rush at The Maple Leaf Gardens. This eventually enabled the band to call Rush's lead guitarist, Alex Lifeson, to jam on the latest album. "The whole reason I started playing guitar was Alex Lifeson," Jag beamed. After growing up on

Rush, Santana and the music Mecca that was the '70s, he was extremely pleased to meet one of his idols in a performing environment. "It was good that he came down and I wasn't disappointed in him at all as a person. His guitar playing is always amazing, but as a person I was definitely not disappointed. ... I was on a cloud. It was like, 'This guy's a great guy!'"

However, Jag's music career almost didn't flourish because he once considered becoming an electrical engineer. However, he came to an important crossroads and now believes he has made the right decision, so far. "You have to make a choice," he believes, "if you're gonna do something like music or something a little on the fringe, like an artist of any type, then you've got to make a choice early and go whole-hog into it. If you go half-assed into it, then you end up back being an electrical engineer," he says with a chuckle.

I Mother Earth certainly avoid any half-hearted attempts with their music, considering the amount of work they pour into each project and show. Now with the release of *Scenery and Fish*, the four Toronto men have polished some of the sound and look. Gone now are the beards and heavy metal hair, but despite the brighter packaging and bigger push from their label EMI, they really haven't changed. And comments about their "new appearance" are hastily pushed

aside by Jag. "You're in the public eye and they don't understand that we made the first record three years ago. Do you want to have the same hair style?" he laughs. "But if you cut your hair, it becomes more [of a statement]. ... But maybe we're gettin' old, and we're trying to look young," he says with a smirk.

"I may never make a dollar from this, but we don't bend to anything," Jag says. "If we felt like writing off 15 pop songs then we would do that. You try to achieve your own personal happiness as far as writing and everything. You can't let anything else factor into that."

"If all you ever do is present who you are - and for two records now that's what we've done - if you change it people can see right through that. You may even sell a million records doing that, but I don't want any part of that. ... If you stay at that level your vision isn't clouded."

Jag vehemently continues to elaborate at length about what the band means to him. Apparently it's more than just a profession - it seems to be the basis of his entire life. "I'm so paranoid about the integrity of this band, because since it's been invented - since me and brother started putting this whole thing together - [integrity] was the line. That was what this band was

Continuing to marvel at his brother's creative proficiency, Jag says, "We have no idea where his inspiration comes from at all. He's just sittin' there watching a hockey game and next thing you know he's got a song done."

Whereas IME now holds the position that their name alone draws large crowds, they obviously didn't command as much attention when they first began playing live venues. In fact, during their early days they read poetry on stage, a gimmick that attracted people and made every night a unique show. In addition, they also used to employ an acquaintance to paint a huge backdrop during their set. "[Once in a while] we'll play Toronto and start the show, and there's this guy behind us on a massive 32 foot canvas, and by the time we hit the last chord he finishes and there's this painting that's totally complete. ... It just makes people go, 'Huh. Once they get past the gimmicks and stuff, they think, 'Hey, these guys aren't so bad.'"

And Jag makes sure the band will never go bad. He dutifully records each and every show and analyses the evening's performance, searching for flaws and better ideas. In fact, it's this workhorse attitude that seems to alienate him from the glamour and hype of industry functions. Jag didn't even attend the Junos at which his band won the Best Hard Rock Album award. "No, I didn't go. I played video games all night and somebody called [to tell me we won]," he laughs. "Yeah, it was my mom who called. It was pretty funny."

Jag doesn't avoid the awards ceremonies for any particular reason. It's just that he would rather not distract himself from the work that garnered the group the award in the first place.

"[The awards] are just somebody saying 'we acknowledge you exist.' To me, that's pretty flattering for a band if anybody knows who you are. We don't take that for granted. ... But it's still business as usual."

And Jag makes sure that the business is taken care of properly. That's why he laboured for hours in the studio to ensure that *Scenery and Fish* lived up to his high standards. For example, he spent eight hours trying to fill a two-and-a-half minute space in the middle of "Shortcut to Moncton." "Well, at the end you hope you can listen to your whole record and go, 'Man, we nailed that one on the head,'" Jag says, "but the whole purpose of developing as a musician is to sort of realize everything that's in your head translated through your hands."

"It's the whole deal," he continues. "Every little bit matters. Every last little thing, [even though] most people pay more attention to something which they themselves do, which is speak. They know words but they know nothing about, say, percussion. But our fans tend to know what's going on. And those are my favourite fans because no matter what, they'll be there for you."

He stops to think and then grins knowingly. "Yeah. It doesn't matter if you cut your hair."

Jag was so consumed by the musical aspects of *Scenery and Fish* that he didn't even realize what was included with the final product.

Peter: The enhanced CD is quite well done. I like how you can click on the songs for information and it will cycle through the main guitar riff of each track.

Jag: Oh wow, I never knew that.

Peter: This is weird. I've been telling you what's on your own CD.

Jag: No no no, that's funny 'cause I haven't watched the video ["One More Astronaut"] either. I saw the first verse of it and I turned it off.

Peter: Actually, that video is on the enhanced CD.

Jag: It is! (Laughs)

## And a good time was had by all...

ANTHONY DAVIS  
THE BRUNSWICKAN

Well, as 220 people found out Saturday night, The Mahones rock. The show started in the Ballroom at around 10:30 pm. This was a bit disappointing because, according to the tickets, it was set to start at 9:30 pm. On the plus side, that was the only thing that went wrong all night. And though the crowd was starting to get a bit annoyed, once the band hit the stage they were quick to forget the wait.

With their foot stompin' beats, the whole audience was up and dancing for pretty much their whole 90 minute set, with the exception of a few over-energized fans who managed to get themselves kicked out at the beginning. The show's highlight came during "Paint This [Fucking] Town Red," when every single person failed around and you could feel the wonderful sensation of the floor as it shook up and down below.

It was a warm feeling to see such a positive reaction from the crowd for the awesome flute playing of Andrew Brown and the very cool mandolin and violin works of Dave Allen. This band is on its way up. It would be nice to see them head back this way before the school year ends.



THE IRISHMEN COMETH: Lead singer Fintan McConnell paints the town an explosive red.



## Metro's a no-go

Starring:  
Eddie Murphy - Scott Roper  
Michael Rapaport - Kevin McCall  
Michael Wincott - Michael Korda

Director: Thomas Carter  
Writer: Randy Feldman

Forgive Eddie Murphy, for he knows not what he does.

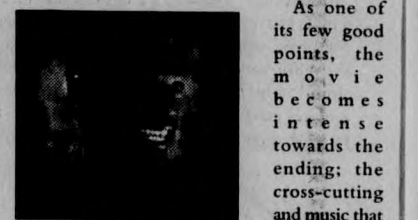
Murphy may have redeemed himself last summer with *The Nutty Professor* but, unfortunately, he chose the incorrect vehicle to continue his climb back to prosperity when he signed on for *Metro*.

In a story riddled with disappointing humour and a lack of originality, Murphy plays Scott Roper, a brash supercop who sorely wants to capture the killer of his cop buddy. Saddled with his new partner, Kevin McCall (Michael Rapaport), and forbidden to work on the case (aren't they always?), the movie bids its time until Roper and McCall coincidentally become involved with a hostage situation that concerns the nefarious cop-killing villain, Michael Korda, played by Michael Wincott.

Throughout the film, Murphy is more charming than funny. Roper's day at the race track with McCall is reminiscent of an afternoon spent with an entertaining uncle, while his relationship with his love interest, Ronnie Tate (Carmen Ejogo), has more a very sweet, bemusing boyfriend appeal.

Murphy doesn't do justice to his notorious reputation for humour in the role as an intense, yet thorough, hostage negotiator. And the rest of the cast must have had a clause in their script that stipulated that they say nothing funny whatsoever. Anything that could even be remotely construed as funny lost its appeal in the film's trailers. Granted, the film does try to focus on the dramatic tension of hostage situations and police drama, but the only characters the audience even remotely cares about are Roper, McCall and Tate.

Humour aside, the only convincing character in the film is Korda, the psychopathic criminal; but, even his undying penchant for murder gets monotonous after a while. However, without it, *Metro* would entirely become a project that wouldn't even receive attention when it airs on television.



EDDIE MURPHY

As one of its few good points, the movie becomes intense towards the ending; the cross-cutting and music that failed to evoke

any emotion throughout the film come into perfect tandem during the final confrontation. But it's simply too late at this point to make *Metro* anything more than mundane.

And while you're wondering why Roper and Tate are peacefully reclining problem-free on a beach in Tahiti immediately after he lost \$10 million worth of jewelry in an explosion, the bigger question you'll be pondering is why you didn't decide to see another movie on the marquee.

PETER J. CULLEN

There were so many entries for last week's Our Lady Peace contest, but not all of you could win. But now you have the chance to take home I MOTHER EARTH's immensely popular *Scenery and Fish* album. The Brunswickan has three copies to give away, and you could win one if you can answer the following question:

### WHO WRITES THE LYRICS?

(Hint: The answer is in the story.)

Drop your answers off to The Bruns or e-mail your info to bruns@unb.ca. Please include your name, student number and phone number.

Last week's wonderful winners of Our Lady Peace's new *Clumsy* album are:

Ian LeTourneau  
Mark Scott  
Greg Lawrence

And the two Naveed winners are:

Will Dumaresq  
Martin Bagnon



- The Beaverbrook Art Gallery  
Atila Richard Lukacs: *E-Work* - Now - Mar 2/97  
*The Power of Images: Atila Richard Lukacs* - Jun 28 & Feb 4/97
- UNB Art Centre presents *Common Ground* (clay works by Craig Schneider) and *Tempting Fate* (paintings by Philip Iverson) at Memorial Hall. Now - Feb 23/97. FREE. 453-4623.
- Gallery Connexion presents *Sop* by Beaty Popescu and Shawn O'Hagan. Now - Feb 28/97. 454-1433.
- Capital Film Society presents *Basquiat* at Tilley Hall 102. Feb 3, 8 pm. \$3 members, \$5 non-members.
- Theatre UNB presents Jean Paul Sartre's *No Exit* at Memorial Hall. Jan 28, 30 & Feb 1. Also, Martinez Sierra's *Kingdom of God*. Jan 29, 30 & Feb 2/97. \$4 students, \$5 all others.
- New Brunswick Museum presents *Jewels of France* at Market Square in Saint John. Now - Apr 30/97. (506) 643-2300.
- UNB Art Centre presents *Showcase '97 UNB/STU Talent*. Feb 27 - Mar 30. Deadline for entry: Feb 7. 453-4623.
- Sloan in the cafeteria. Tomorrow night.