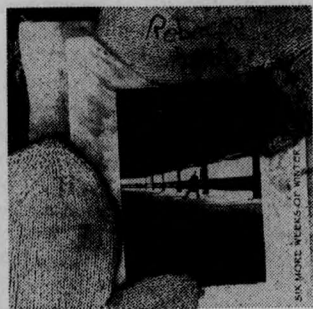




I've been waiting for quite some time for the Pet Shop Boys to blow it. I mean, it's been eleven years now, and they have still put a foot wrong - they even pulled off a Village People cover ('Go West') and made it sound like the most stirring thing in ages. Anyway, they are back, and this time they are *Bilingual*. And that second language would be Spanish; the Latin influence that was previously hinted at on 'Domino Dancing' makes an reappearance in the biggest way imaginable. There are even some Spanish lyrics, complete with a very thoughtful translation. But the overall feel is still that of a Pet Shop Boys album with songs that just get to remixed (for *Disco 3*, I'd imagine...), with a couple of slower songs that could never be described as token. In fact, 'The Survivors', a rather moving paean to AIDS survivors, stands out as one of the best songs on *Bilingual* - they've always done decent ballads. All in all, this is just another great, wonderful Pet Shop Boys album. Or to put it simply, complete godhead.

The Minus Five are probably the closest thing that there is to an indie supergroup these days - you get Scott McCaughey from The Young Fresh Fellows, Ken Stringfellow and Jon Auer from The Posies and Peter Buck from R.E.M. along with various other almost famous people from almost famous bands like The Walkabouts. Pretty impressive. And *Old Liquidator* is a rather nice album too - very gentle and non-threatening in the most part, although when you listen closely to the lyrics, they seem a little more peculiar. Almost sinister. But Scott McCaughey's voice is so

soothing that he could read the scariest book in existence and it would seem like a bedtime story. There is also a pop sensibility in all of McCaughey's songs (just like in all those Young Fresh Fellows albums that nobody bought...) that assist in making *Old Liquidator* feel like such a congenial record - you'll be singing along almost instantly, and that is never a bad thing. Unless you sing like me, of course.



I was just beginning to come to terms with the genius of Bernard Butler's guitar playing as part of Suede when he took it upon himself to leave. Typical. And then he did that 'free agent' thing where he turned up from time to time on other people's records (shades of the great Johnny Marr methinks). He did settle down for a while though, with an outspoken, gay, black Diva by the name of David McAlmont (with the most amazing voice) in a duo who went by the very imaginative collective name of McAlmont & Butler. They released a couple of singles which are collected on *The Sound Of...* along with the various B-sides, and it becomes obvious very quickly which songs were released as

singles and which ones were kept as B-sides. 'Yes' is an absolutely wonderful song which soars head and shoulders above everything else on here - it is reminiscent of the best that Motown had to offer. Magnificent. The most curious thing about this collection is how unlike Suede it sounds even though it arrived so soon after Butler's Suede days; only one song ('The Debitor') sounds like it could have sneaked onto Suede's debut album. A mixed bag, but worth owning for the very good stuff.

What with all those big record deals of a couple of years ago, it is sometimes hard to believe that any band from Halifax has a low profile; Sloan? Jale? Exactly. But Rebecca West has managed to sneak out a few records without much of a fanfare. And why would they need a fanfare when they contain good music? Well, ask the marketing people to answer that one. Their new EP is entitled *Five More Weeks Of Winter*, and contains five songs (recorded under the influence of snow, they inform us) that continue this low key approach to charming us. Most of the time, they do the gentle, strumming thing with the slightest hint of a folk influence (which probably comes from living on the East Coast). And even when they try to crank up the volume on 'Mystery Bird', it never sounds intimidating. And deep down, you just know that there is probably another quieter song that will have four minutes of tape recorded 'ambience' stuck on the end of it just around the corner. You'll probably never hear of them.

And talking of folk music, Anna & Kate McGarrigle have a new album out, and it's only been six years this time - they've never really been known as people to hurrying out their records. But, as always, it has been worth the wait for fans of the folkier side of women in 'rock'. So what are the selling points of *Matapedia*? The gorgeous layered

vocal harmonies would have to up at the top of the list, as would the traditional instruments that turn up on the various songs (I've always been a sucker for a banjo; don't ask me why). But ultimately it is the quality of the songwriting that makes this album a success - the songs make sense when listened to closely, and that is a good thing. And more unusual than you'd imagine. *Matapedia* can be described as beautiful without it being cliched. And they're Canadian too.



The first thing that hits you about The Eels' debut album, *Beautiful Freak*, is the weird artwork. Lots of people with unnaturally big eyes. Very scary looking. But I managed to get up enough courage to pick up the CD and stick it in the player. What did I hear? Something which can be described as interesting, but not very memorable. The interesting aspect of things comes from the fact that half of the Dust Brothers (who helped out with Beck's recent masterpiece) does the production duties, giving it their usual funky feel thanks to a generous smattering of samples. Nothing wrong with that. But most of the songs just don't seem to click - the best ones all remind me of either Radiohead's 'Creep' with that trick of a quiet verse and loud chorus or The Gandharvas' 'The First Day Of Spring' with all its gentle slowness. Repeated listens have had *Beautiful Freak* grow on me a little bit, but those big eyes still give me the willies.

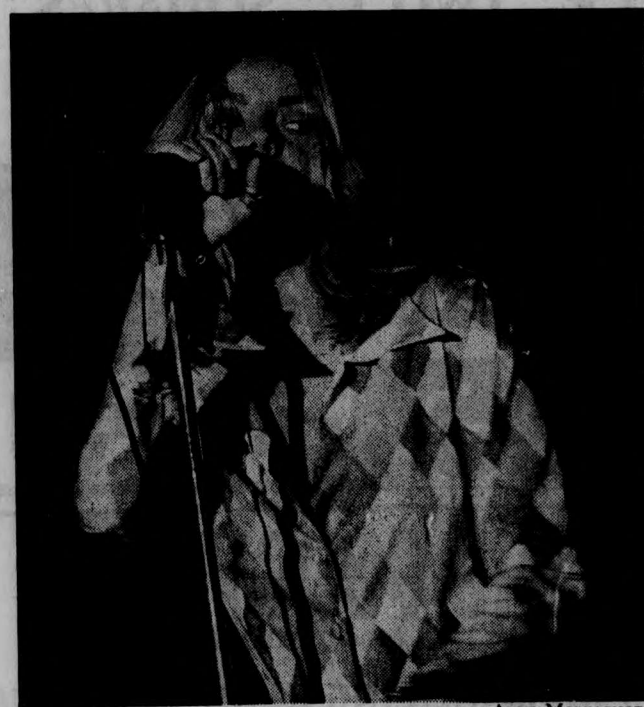
Sweet Sizzlin' Sass

GREG TUCKER

THE BRUNSWICKAN

Sass Jordan, the raspy voiced Canadian singer, played to a packed crowd at Sweetwaters this past Friday. Although the show was scheduled to start at 10 PM, a few technical problems caused a delay, and Miss Jordan finally took the stage at 11 PM.

The five piece band opened with "Heatwave", and continued to play such favorites as "Love Me Tonight", "Make you a Believer", and "High Road Easy." Perhaps it was our position, but the acoustics were not exactly up to par with Miss Jordan's bar style voice. At times the music overpowered her when she began to sing it only came out as screeching.



SINGING HER SINGLES: Belting out her best-loved and radio-friendly tunes, Sass Jordan made a successful return to Fredericton.

In many of the songs the lyrics could not be distinguished, and often left the listener wondering what song she had played. A bathroom break showed the best seats in the house were to be found in the john. The walls filtered out the background noise and Sass Jordan's voice could be heard clearly and without difficulty. Although it was the most comfortable and soundworthy place to be, spending the next hour in the lavatory to hear the show better did not appeal to me.

This point aside, the crowd really took to her energetic style, although it did take a while for the crowd to respond. Not until Miss Jordan sang "Going Back Again," her tenth of eighteen songs, did the audience start to respond. After that there was not a

foot or hand unmoving. Her repertoire also included such upbeat songs as "Going to Hit the Highway," and slower material like "Cry Baby".

An encore brought Miss Jordan back on the stage and she played a trio of songs, even inviting the crowd to participate in "You Don't Have to Remind Me."

Sass Jordan has a powerful voice and a great personality which made for an entertaining evening. She involved the audience in her songs and talked to them, not at them. Her soulful voice added to the atmosphere, while a charismatic personality helped draw her listeners in. Except for the acoustics and the slight delay, the show was worth the ticket price.

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Capital Film Schedule

The Capital Film Society has established its Fall Schedule and is set up for another season of award-winning alternative films. Showings begin at 8 PM sharp, in the Alred Bailey Auditorium (Tilley 102). Student Full-Year Memberships are \$18.00, with an admission fee of \$3.00 per film. Seniors Memberships are \$18.00, and Regular Memberships are \$30.00. For information, contact Barry Cameron at (506) 455-2344.

September 30 Kansas City

October 7 Angels and Insects

Dir: Philip Hass

Returning from the Amazon, penniless naturalist and explorer William Adamson (Mark Rylance) finds an unlikely patron in Reverend Harold Alabaster (Jeremy Kemp), an amateur insect collector, who invites William into his home in the English countryside. William falls under the spell of the eldest Alabaster daughter, Eugenia (Patsy Kensit). After marrying and experiencing erratic behaviour from his wife and children, William begins scientific research on the local insect population. But his scientific investigations reveal a shocking discovery of the ways of the Alabaster household, a discovery that reveals the decay and perversion lurking beneath the decorous surface of this prominent family.

October 14 I Shot Andy Warhol

October 21 Cold Comfort Farm

October 28 Flirting with Disaster

November 4 Long Day's Journey into Night

November 11 Lone Star

Dir: John Sayles, USA, 1996, 120 mins.

Passion Fish, *The Secret of Roan Inish* and *Matewan* director John Sayles is back with a taut small-town police drama that eventually evolves into an examination of race, violence and history in the borderlands where Mexican and Texas cultures intermingle. Screen legend Kris Kristofferson stars as a sheriff who gets in way over his head in an investigation of the 40 year-old murder of one of the town's previous marshals. Writer/director Sayles, who is increasingly in demand as a last-minute, uncredited script doctor (latest rescue job: *Apollo 13*), expertly lets the film pick up steam over a stream of gradually engrossing details. Already acclaimed as his best work, *Lone Star* represents American independent filmmaking at its finest.

November 18 Anne Frank Remembered

Dir: Jon Blair, UK/Germany, 1995, 122 mins.

Winner of this year's Oscar for the best feature length documentary, *Anne Frank Remembered* is a profound, thorough and ultimately definitive film portrait of the extraordinary adolescent who put a face on the true cost of the Holocaust. Director Blair had full co-operation of the Anne Frank House, her estate, and almost all the principals of one of the most heartbreaking stories of this century. The result is justly acclaimed and deeply moving portrait of a young woman who's diary details her own remarkable literary awakening amongst the most difficult circumstances imaginable. *Anne Frank Remembered* includes the only known moving picture footage of Frank, newly discovered from a pre-war neighbourhood wedding.


November 25 Welcome to the Dollhouse

Dir: Todd Solandz, USA, 1995, 87 mins.

A sensation at Sundance, Todd Solandz' *Welcome to the Dollhouse* treads a fine line between pre-teen horror show, suburban farce and trenchant expose. However it qualifies, *Welcome to the Dollhouse* is fabulously creepy and howlingly funny. Casting late childhood as the theatre of cruelty, Solandz follows the life of Dawn Weiner (Heather Matarazzo) as she negotiates the disaster of junior high. Tortured by bullies, ignored by her mom, tormented by her goody-two-shoes little sister, Dawn finds solace by falling head over heels for the hunky lead singer of her brother's garage band. Things go quickly astray, however, leading to domestic chaos, fear, loathing and eventual reconciliation.

December 2 The Celluloid Closet

December 9 Shanghai Triad

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