

COFFEE SPOONS

by David Schleich

Now Morgan (he's my pet spider) usually lives quietly and industriously in his web near my desk. It's only on rare occasions that he complains about anything. He's forever constructing new web designs. 'Perfecting my techniques and production time,' he says. He has ample food supply. I see to that. And, contingent on my landlady's profits, intermittent heat in the winter. On principle, I assure him, I refuse to sub-let his corner to any other spider. But yesterday this persistent, pleasing equilibrium was shattered. At first, I thought the noise was the tap dripping in the kitchen two rooms away. As I said, Morgan seldom complains and if I hadn't noticed he would never have said a thing. Yesterday, though, I heard him coughing. He wouldn't discuss the affliction. I pleaded with him to be reasonable, to see his physician, to get some pills at least.

"You'll get pneumonia, Morgan," I warned.

"Nonsense," he returned, "it'll go away by itself. You young cholics don't let nature do nothing alone. Besides, those new clinics are just like high schools. Them doctors, 'specially them young ones, they know it all and you can't even negotiate the bill. I'm stayin' put."

We discussed at length Morgan's real reasons for avoiding the clinic. He seems altogether too suspicious of young doctors. And, mildly suspicious of properly prosperous middle-aged ones.

"Plumbers! Money-grubbin' plumbers!" Morgan shrieked from some dark corner of his web. Morgan goes to the darkest corner of his web when he's upset. I'm sure he keeps pictures of his mother back there somewhere.

I forgot about Morgan for a while. But -- well, perhaps I was too hasty. Sincerely concerned, yes. Concerned about my little friend's health. But now? I asked him,

"You have Alberta Health Care don't you?"

"Nope," he growled, snarling at one of the squeaky clean officious males and females darting about.

I should have known better than to argue with Morgan about socialized medicine. I was relieved when the young nurse came and carried Morgan away. But, he was back in no time grinning from leg to leg. We were on our way out to my bicycle when I broke the silence.

"There now, easy wasn't it? Did he give you some pills?"

"Nope."

Morgan was acting pretty cocky. I decided to go back in and check with the nurse. If Morgan had a prescription I was going to see that it be filled. Boldly, perhaps a bit heroically I went through the three doors separating the public from the secret places of the doctor. The nurse at the typewriter seemed to be recovering -- but the webbing in her hair was distressing her greatly. I caught only a glimpse of the young doctor as I retreated. He was in a foetal position on the floor, bound from head to foot in silver webbing, cursing at "that damned socialist spider" and muttering something about "time being money".

"A ridiculous equivalent," Morgan said later, "time being money."

I remember nodding in agreement. I noticed that Morgan's cough was gone as we sat this morning sipping coffee, playing with our spoons, discussing biology and politics.

ANOTHER PLEA

Heh heh. That was quite the little plea in Tuesday's paper, wasn't it.

Well that's what happens when you leave a Man's Work to a lowly computer.

Anyway, what it meant to say was that there will be, honestly, a meeting of anyone and everyone interested in working in any facet of arts writing for the Gateway this year.

This meeting will, barring natural and unnatural disasters, take place Friday afternoon (September 17) at 5:00 p.m. in room 282 of the Students' Union Building.

Please don't be intimidated by the lurid obscene posters on the wall or the hand-made leather whips hanging over the door of the long funny rubber things around windows or the rusty iron maiden in the corner or the

Ladies and gentlemen, the poor deviate who was writing this piece up to this point has been effectively subdued and you may now resume your normal activities.

We of the Citizen's Bureau for Prevention will try to insure such ugly incidents do not happen in the future.

Thank you.

Quicksilver and the Captain

THE MAGIC BAND



Don be nimble,
Van be quick,
Vliet jump over the music
shtick.

High Wind has been good to Edmonton. This increasingly efficient group of Vancouver entrepreneur heads has, over the last year, put on some of the finest rock shows this city has seen.

They were the ones who first brought Frank Zappa to Edmonton last fall. They then followed this up with Love (a group that didn't receive anywhere near the appreciation they deserved), the Procol Harum/Chilliwack concert (surely a landmark for both Chilliwack and between-set shows), and most recently, the all-day rock concert in Clarke Stadium.

But hold onto your hats ladies and gentlemen because the best is yet to come.

This Saturday, September 18, in the Edmonton Gardens, High Wind is presenting a show that is guaranteed to fry each and every little cell you have swimming around in that mind of yours.

Quicksilver Messenger Service. Captain Beefheart and the Magic Band. The Velvet Underground. Kinda quickens the pulse jus' thinkin' about it, don't it?

Top billing in a show that must have been next to impossible to figure out top billing for is going to Quicksilver. And, when you get right down to it, everybody likes Quicksilver. They're a nice band, easy on the head. No wild screaming electronic madness; no hyper heavy rock; just good solid music.

Quicksilver is, as everybody knows, one of the progenitors and apostles of the San Francisco sound. Together with the

Jefferson Airplane, Grateful Dead, and Crosby, Stills, Nash and Young, Quicksilver concentrates on making complex and intricately interwoven music that is nonetheless easy to listen to, the complexity being the vehicle by which the desired impressions of ease and sensuality are created.

One final point. I have never had the experience myself, but I am told by a few trusted friends that Quicksilver is a show band and that their best stuff is done live. I'll pass that on to you and you may consider it as you will.

Now then, Captain Beefheart. What can I say?

Those of you who know the good Captain (alias Don Van Vliet) must realize that describing and evaluating him is next to impossible. He is beyond standard musical descriptions simply because he is way beyond standard music.

Beefheart is to rock music what John Cage is to scholastic (I hate the term "classical") music. He is a writer, player and theorist who is almost playfully toying with the concepts of the present avant garde. This translates, via the Magic Band, into Beefheart's concept of "a band of non-musicians who are painting artists."

None of the Magic Band (Beefheart included) can read music and the Captain likes it that way. It leaves him free to mold himself and his band into a subjectively artistic unit who, instead of playing songs, play "pictures".

And what pictures!
How does this grab you?

Mantra Ray a black and white hand groped in blue light under the moon scratched fingernail

Tipped off full ran to one side

of heavens black top hat God smiled, his black and white wings wet with tears of peace perfumed with lifes perfections.

There is no doubt that the Captain is a surrealist. But to label him that is to cruelly limit the range and scope of his sadly neglected talents.

Flying in the face of every rule in every book of music, Captain Beefheart manages to synthesize his own sound (and it is definitely his--I have heard no one that comes anywhere close) out of such diverse elements as Chicago blues, delta blues, hard rock and 20th Century scholastic music (hello again, John Cage). And, by God, he makes it work.

And of course there is also the Velvet Underground. Good 'ol Velvet have been around for a long time since they were first formed in New York City.

Perhaps more than anything else, their place in the concert will give us a glimpse of where we've been and hopefully where we might be going. "Heroin", "Sister Ray", and "White Light/White Heart" have been mentioned as possible numbers for the concert.

One more piece of really good news. If you were at the Procol Harum/Chilliwack show, you probably remember the light show and the cartoons that went on between sets. Well, those same things are going to be going on at this show.

The show gets underway at 7:30 p.m. Saturday night with Velvet Underground followed by Captain Beefheart and the Magic Band and then Quicksilver Messenger Service (these last two will play sets of equal length, hopefully 1½ hours each).

Tickets are \$3.50 advance and \$4.50 at the door.