

An Evening With Matthew Barber and the Union Dues

By Liam Corcoran
Contributor

A small but appreciative audience

was on hand last Monday night at The Wave to see Matthew Barber and the Union Dues. It sucks that one of the best nights of rock music the Wave will host this year went largely unattended by our student body. Not to say that this wasn't expected. Barber is still more or less unknown in these parts. He plays to enthusiastic crowds in Toronto, but without steady radio play and videos on MuchMusic it is difficult to cause a stir on PEI. (Oddly enough, his single "We're Gonna Play" which received air-play on Big Dog for most of the summer was left off Monday night's setlist). Despite the low numbers, Barber and his band mates seemed to be in good spirits. The performance was excellent and there was good interaction between the crowd and the stage. Matthew may be the frontman and songwriter, but you get the feeling that you are watching a real band rather than a solo artist with a cast of hired musicians. (Bassist Julian Brown, drummer Joel Stouffer and guitarist Paul Kolinski have been backing Barber since 2002). Barber's brand of rock n roll is inspired by the classics and presented with a modern bite. As you listen, it is easy to hear the influence of Bob Dylan, Neil Young and Jeff Buckley. His voice is sweet enough to carry a mid-tempo ballad and strong enough to bang out a rocker. Lyrically, Barber's songs have a consistent young-boy-in-love

theme, and he pulls this off with class.

The debut album from Barber was entitled "Means And Ends". It received considerable critical attention and gave him the confidence to relocate to Toronto from Kingston. Shortly after his move, Barber formed the Union Dues. With his band in tow, Barber quickly gained attention throughout his home province. In 2003, a new album was recorded. For this venture, Ian McGettigan was signed on as producer. McGettigan, formerly of Thrush Hermit, was a valuable addition, having already produced for Canadian indie favorites such as Joel Plaskett, The Flashing Lights and Superfriendz. The result of this project was "The Story Of Your Life". This six-song EP has received even more attention than his debut and has led to cross-Canada touring and a respectable buzz (Barber and the Dues were one of the most talked about acts at this past summer's North by Northeast festival in Toronto). Watch for the video to the brand new single "Little Love" and also keep an eye out for Barber's kid sister Jill, who just happens to be an excellent singer/songwriter as well. Her debut EP "Oh Heart" along with "The Story of Your Life" can be picked up at most record stores.

By Matt Cameron
Contributor

CD Review: Velvet Revolver

Guns N' Roses were at the forefront of hard rock in the late eighties and early nineties. Songs like 'November Rain' 'Welcome To The Jungle,' 'Sweet Child of Mine' and 'Patience' showcased the band's versatility as a unit that could write songs with hooks, but still make them accessible to a mainstream rock audience. However, the good times couldn't last forever and the band fell apart in 1996 when singer Axl Rose became a pain in the ass to work with; as a result original 'Gunnies— Slash, Matt Sorum, and Duff Mckagan left for greener pastures, leaving Axl to work on the long delayed Chinese Democracy album. In 2003, Matt, Duff and Slash recruited Suicidal Tendencies' guitarist Dave Kushner and began to write songs under the name "The Project." The only problem? No lead singer. Enter Scott Weiland, troubled vocalist of Stone Temple Pilots. Weiland seemed a liability having gone through severe drug and alcohol problems in the past, but the group took a chance on him— and now Velvet Revolver drops their debut album, 'Contraband;' the question is, can these guys come together and make a good album? The answer is a surprising 'yes.' Often super-groups who form do not meet fan's growing expectations, but 'Contraband' is (cont.)

STUDENT SAVER SPECIALS

**DOMINO'S PIZZA NOW OFFERS
GREAT STUDENT DISCOUNTS!**



Get great prices on
pizza when you
present your
UPEI student i.d.

566-9000

large pepperoni, \$7.99

large with 3 toppings, \$8.99

large with 5 toppings, \$9.99

Delivery to UPEI campus, Browns Court and surrounding areas only.
Must present student i.d.