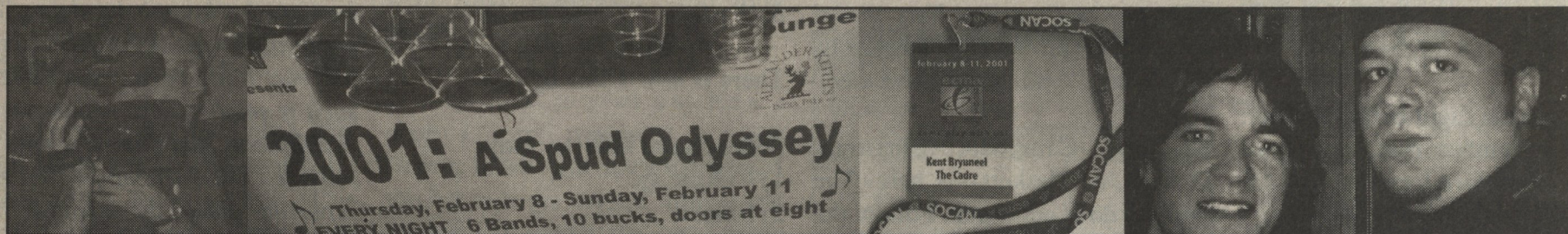


Having just darted through a semi-serious windstorm, I am now huddled behind the Inn on the Hill. There is a sign on the door saying, *In Jesus Name We Play*. I don't think this has anything to do with the ECMAs.



## Postcards From the Damned: A Quest for Soul and Pizza at the ECMAs

PHOTOS AND WORDS BY KENT J. BRUYNEEL

(WITH HANDWRITTEN NOTES BY MIKE O'NEILL, JOHN MACKENZIE AND JOEL PLASKETT)

6:00 pm

Baba's. Ice, ice everywhere—I am almost always falling.

The place is darkly haunting, like a room without a soul. You can see the pent-up testosterone like a bunch of vacant supermodels anxious for their close-up, but still ever nauseous. The room is full of male record executives. Much Music's Mike Campbell stands looming over Baba's Dave Christian. Christian is not rude as he says, "We are all closed up and tickets go on sale at 7:00 pm." I wheel and make eyes with the crowd. They were all hoping for someone else. The irony present in the fact that Christian has told me, "We are all closed up," with 40 people waiting for free drinks is, I suppose, not lost on him. But, you would be hard pressed to tell.

6:15 pm

Back to the Alter-Cases. I have just coughed up a large projectile and it has landed on my pant leg. Not only am I in the inferior print media (because good God man, fuck the Internet, Much Music and TV are King), but now I have spit on

myself. I have just now walked back in to Brennan's and been told that I have just missed UPEI president, Wade MacLauchlan.

15 minutes on the road, two years in the can. One time in two years he shows up at something and I am home checking my email and shaving.

Also, The Rudy Huxtable Project is back on stage. I have actually paid for their CD, *with demonstrative objectives*.

I have just asked Stephan what Wade said. "The most important thing," Stephan said, "was 'Are The Rude Mechanicals playing?'"

*Anything else?*

"No...That's it. That's him."

Sarah has just mentioned to me that one of the Kenny brothers has been standing in the same spot by the bar virtually unmoved, since 11:00 am. What is he waiting for? Where is his soul?

Technical difficulties. Stumble is Indigo Girl-like, I guess, and the A&E editor from the Dalhousie

*Gazette* has just grabbed my ass.

*Some time passes.*

I have just returned from Baba's for the second time. The Baba's door policy as metaphor for the music business:

*You can buy a ticket, but the ticket is worthless because if they have enough people, they will keep selling tickets until it is full. The ticket is worthless. No refund, no credit, no dice.*

"We have tickets...that we paid for!"

*"Sorry, we re full.*

"We have laminates."

*Oh, then you re fine.*

Jill from BMG Music considers canceling her falafel, but she was talked out of it by the bouncer/poet, John MacKenzie. He also talked me out of buying five tickets in advance.

"I am trying to save you \$50 here, Kent."

"We are dealing with capacity issues here."

"See, it's Much Music (points to sign for 2001: A Spud Odyssey)."

I had to go back. I could smell it. The Fear is what Hunter S. Thompson called it. All those greedheads in one place, a camera, a notebook. A story. The story.

I lit out from the Alter-Cases smiling, thinking of Mike Campbell and *The Cadre* in my pocket. Guerrilla.

Two beer. Three shots of Light Blight.

I am now deep inside. As close to evil as you can be and still have Pat Deighan in the room. I am alone in the bathroom and I have just taken this photo. It is of the *Cadre*, and agent on the Baba's toilet.

