

Ottawa Sends Relief in Furnaceface



By Matt Hennessey

It is not very often that The Barn is invaded by central Canadians, who shower us Easterners with grand gifts of music, political theory and social commentary. I am not necessarily referring to the Natural Law Party. No, there was no yogic flying on September 25th, instead, Ottawa's own Furnaceface pulled all the stops and branded the small crowd of power pop lovers with their exciting fusion of punk, hard rock and just a hint of hip-hop to add uniqueness.

This was the fourth stop on a cross Canada tour, for Furnaceface, who are supporting their latest release entitled, *unsafe@anyspeed*. Their 3 previous albums, which were released over their 7 year career, garnered them much critical acclaim and thrust them into the spotlight as one of the premier underground bands. Although Furnaceface would be hesitant to call themselves an underground band stating that such musical formats as "raves" are much more "alternative" to the mainstream now. "Well, the underground scene has basically disap-

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first 2 albums, *Let It Down*, and *Just Buy It*, were released before the Nirvana craze. With the help of such institutions as college radio and Much Music, *This Will Make You Happy*, their third record,



increased Furnaceface's own popularity. They also picked up a Much Music Video Award for "If You Love Her, Buy Her A Gun".

The opening band, Halifax's Grace Babies, took the stage shortly after 10 o'clock. The crowd greeted them politely and waited to be entertained. Nobody in The Barn was disappointed. The Grace Babies crashed through their set list with sheer energy, pizzazz and a sincere desire to perform; these guys have fun on stage. They pulled off their great mix of 70's party rock and 90's power pop in very tight fashion, leaving little showmanship left out. Some may interpret their rock posing as silly but it certainly puts a smile on everyone's face. The band showcased a lot of material from their debut CD, *Lure*, available on No Records.

For all of you who missed the show, shame on you for having to study on a cold and wet school night. However, all of you missed an amazing show, and I hope that the next time that Furnaceface invades Charlottetown, you will all go. It will be the best ticket in town.

one's face. The band



Third Day *self titled* (Reunion/Word Dist.)

This disc originally came out last year on the Grey Dot label, but the band jumped to Reunion this year, and re-released their popular debut CD, with two new songs. The new material simply adds to an already excellent album. Musically, the band has been compared to R.E.M. and Hootie and the Blowfish, but this reviewer fails to see many similarities. Instead, Third Day is closer to Stevie Ray Vaughn, with a blues-rock sound. The voice of Mac Powell, the lead singer, definitely adds to this feel.

Literally, the songs are very strong. The messages are clear, straightforward, and refreshingly undisguised. Whereas some Christian musicians hide their beliefs behind their poetry and musical skill, Third Day is very clear in their stance, and also skilled musically. The tunes run from poignant ballads like "Thief" and "Love Song" to powerful, searing numbers like "Consuming Fire" and "Did You Mean It". The band is more than competent with either style. If their second disc is even close to this one, Third Day is poised to become one of the most important bands in Christian Music.

Phil Keaggy 220 (Sparrow/CMC Dist.)

The world's best guitarist with less than 10 fingers has done something different on this CD. He forgot to include lyrics. That's right, all the songs are instrumental. And they're all very good. In Keaggy's usual style, the songs are generally upbeat, but not heavy. Essentially, this is a showcase for his exceptional musical talent, and he has fun with it. There really isn't much else to say, except that someone else in the office thought I was playing a Steve Vai disc. If you like superb guitar, this is one to pick up. With no lyrics, it is great as study music or as something to sit back and enjoy.

Christafari *Valley of Decision* (Gotee Records/Word Dist.)

While Christian reggae may seem like an oxymoron to some, Christafari mixes Jamaican sounds with straightforward Christian lyrics in all their music. This new disc is no different. The band has a couple of new members, and they use a few new instruments, but it's still the same sound that made their previous release *Soulfire* a success. This CD makes even better driving music. The tunes are catchy and upbeat, and the lyrics are as cleverly rhymed as ever, although you might need to read the liner notes to get the translation of the Jamaican patois they use in a few songs.

It's hard to pick out the best songs, but I liked "Surrender", "Time", and the title track. "Modern Day Pharisee" is cool, and I enjoyed "Set Me Free" as well. Okay, so I liked the whole disc. The only song I didn't have much use for is the last cut, "No Puedo Dejar", because it's a Spanish version of an earlier cut, "Can't Stop". Even without that track, the CD still has over sixty minutes of music. It might not be for everybody, but if you like fun and funky tunes with a Caribbean flavour, this CD is for you.