



Halifax on Music: A Diary

By Melissa Buote

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 13

7:30am Left home. It was too early. Way too early.

3:00pm Got into Halifax after a long drive. Made my way to Cafe Mokka to pick up a press pass for my job as reviewer for Exclaim! magazine. There were problems getting a second press pass for a CIMN volunteer, but after a

while all problems were solved by one of the super-organizers, Marc Brown (Murderecords).

6:00pm The first show started. Thursday Toads -- a band from Dartmouth, NS -- were the first band up. They were ok...your average east coast "indie" pop. Cleveland Steamer took the stage after them. That band is way too loud! I left the building and it still sounded like I was in the

front row. Madhat were third and rocked the joint although the sound was really bad. Super Friendz were the second last band at this club (Cafe Ole) and they were, in a word, amazing. They always are. Watching Matt Murphy play guitar is practically breathtaking.

10:00pm Left Cafe Ole, but got detained on my way to Reflections to see Broken Girl (Julie Claytor of Eric's Trip fame). I got to baby-sit an amp for one of the previous band members and then I was on my way.

10:15pm Broken Girl was on stage. Her set was so sweet and beautiful. Winnipeg's Duotang followed Broken Girl. They were so wonderful. This was one of the sets that I was waiting to see since I heard they were going to be playing. Needless to say, I was not disappointed. Jale was the last band to play at Reflections that night. Their performances were great, but the sound left a lot to be desired. One of the guitars was too loud and the vocals were too quiet.

1:00am Trekked over to Birdland, passing a line of tents and people camped out at the Halifax Metro Centre waiting to buy tickets to the Tragically Hip. Made it to Birdland in time to see the Olympic Death Squad (Mark Robinson from Unrest) start up. I just missed Thrush Hermit though. Olympic Death Squad was great, but I was really tired so I left part way through the set.

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 14

1:00pm I woke up after telling myself at ten that same morning that I would just stay in bed for 10 more minutes.

Looked at the clock and realized I was missing Dusty Sorebet and Lonnie James at the Rock and Roll Carnival (sob).

2:30pm Made it to the R&R Carnival in time to see the Urban Surf Kings. They were good.

5:00pm Went over to the Bicycle Shop Cafe for the Halifax Off the Wagon Cocktail Party. Ok, so there were no cocktails, just free beer. The Avengers 7 played an instrumental set for this party. They were great. An attempt at the first few bars of the Super Friendz's "Down In Flames" and a cover of Metallica's "Enter Sandman" caused lots of laughter. By this time the hurricane was in full swing.

7:00pm Went home and ate dinner. The hurricane was still going full throttle so I was wet and uncomfortable from this point on.

8:30pm Headed over to the Birdland for the big show that night. The weather was horrible and power was going out all over the place, but thankfully not at the club. SIANspheric 4 were first on the stage that night. They are reputedly one of the 5 best live bands in Canada, and with good reason. I left for their last song to interview Chris Murphy of Sloan. Returned to the club for the start of a wonderfully country influenced set by Sub Pop's Scud Mountain Boys. I really enjoyed them. The Pushkings, a band made up of a bunch of harvard boys, were third and they were great! They sounded almost brit-poppy and they won over the audience immediately. One of my favourite new bands. Change Of Heart played right before headliners, Sloan. Their set seems laced with hostility and bitterness, but I've heard it always is. They were really good nonetheless. Sloan played last. The performance was good, the atmosphere sucked.

It was hot and sweaty and way too packed. There was a lot of moshing...even to ballads like "Bells On."

3:00am I got home and went to bed.

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 15

10:30am Woke up and got ready for the Cinnamon Toast Brunch.

12:00pm I arrived at the Downtowners restaurant for the Brunch. Sat down with friends to dig into the delicious meal of corn, beans, pancakes, eggs and of course, cinnamon toast. Andy McDaniel of the band Leonard Conan played an acoustic set filled with lovely songs including the wonderful "Frightened Of...". Soon after his set, the wonderful, unforgettable Piggy -- Halifax's calypso band -- took the stage (or floor if you want to be literal) for a rousing set of songs. They were so wonderful!! Probably the best live band in the world. No exaggeration.

3:00pm Headed over to Wormwood's theatre for the Comic Jam. Stinkin' Rich was part way through his set so I sat down and watched him spin his marvellous tales about how he worked at CKDU and more. Al Tuck took the stage a little while later. I had enough time between sets to go upstairs and peruse all the comics and magazines that were there for the buying. What a pleasant set by the amazingly gifted Al Tuck. It was really casual with lots of audience feed back and he even played an unfinished tune called "Not I" that he improvised for the last half. Beautiful.

5:00pm went to a great little Cafe and had an excellent falafel for dinner. Yummmm.

6:00pm headed over to the Sanctuary for the last show

Book Reviews

Killer Tea Cosies (and how to make them)

By Annette and Diane Wallis
Raincoast Books

Did you know that in the 1920's and '30's tea cozies were very trendy? I didn't. I know teapot lovers by the dozens and felt this book would make an excellent accompaniment for anyone who loves teapots. I was right. The book contains twenty wonderfully creative cozies for your teapot, from a crocheted pansy cover to a delightful chicken-shaped tea cozy. This book is a must have for both the tea lover and crafts person. This book looks at how something as practical as a tea cozy can be a decorative ornament as well. Cozies off to Annette and Diane Willis for their creative designs.

J. Caseley

The Mediterranean Cat

By Hans Silvester
Chronicle Books

Hans Silvester has once again captured on film the feelings of cats as they play, sleep, fight and eat. A cat lover himself, Hans begins the book by telling about the wonderful cats that have been part of his life. The pictures in the book are wonderful, vivid and clear, with a real feeling for what is going on. The setting for the book, the Mediterranean, is a wonderful background for one of nature's most agile and beautiful of animals (can you tell I'm a cat lover?). A definite must for anyone who loves his or her cat. I also suggest checking out one of the other books from this series, Cats in the Sun. *The Mediterranean Cat* is the sixth in this wonderful series.

J. Caseley

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