

entertainment & entertainment (&arts)

Patrick Said...or at least he might have said...

By KAREN RAWLINES

We've heard it all before. Sloan is from Halifax. Sloan is popular. Sloan's latest release, *One Chord to Another* has gone gold in Canada. Interestingly enough, a lot more goes into this band than three chords and witty lyrics. Guitarist and singer/songwriter Patrick Pentland is making a career at what he actually enjoys doing, and is becoming the envy of an entire generation in the process.

"It's a job. But the word job -- generally at a certain age -- people think it's a bad thing... it's the best job to have. We're making a living doing it. There are many aspects to being in a band at this level: you are a songwriter, so in that aspect you are an artist, but you are also working playing shows." While Pentland admits that he was dreaming of this sort of career since age 12, it really seemed feasible after finishing university.

"At that point it was a hobby. We figured, 'let's try to make it a career... let's go out on the road.' We were lucky -- we got attention quite quickly, and then there was label interest. And then there was money that could help support us when we were able to go out on the road."

The theory that a rock band could be a profitable future is especially rampant today, with every second high school band thinking that they are the "Next Big Thing." While Sloan is receiving nationwide attention and slowly becoming a household name, Pentland does not believe that this way of life is embraced by everyone.

"I don't really think it's that accepted. I'm a bit of a freak show for my parents' friends. Some people have weird perceptions of us [bands]. It's either like we're bums and we're not doing anything, or that we're rich or rock stars. It's actually pretty normal."

This is not to say that Sloan's future -- or Pentland's future -- may follow a "normal" path as years go by. "As you grow older, the opportunities outside of music become smaller."

"As you grow older, it's 'do or die', or 'do or starve.'"

Presently, however, things are going well for Sloan, and Pentland's songwriting for "The Good in Everyone" and "Everything You've Done Wrong" is helping continue the momentum.

"I was really proud that two songs I wrote did so well, and it [One Chord To Another] basically went gold when those were out."

"There's artistic value in trying to write a hit single. It's hard. You have to learn how to do it. I don't like to use the word 'art' so much. It can be misconstrued as being too... I mean, we're a rock band. We play rock and roll."

The rock and roll scene generally comes with the image of mosh pits and crowd-surfing fans. After six years of live shows, Pentland says that crowds tend to "get a bit out of control, which used to be fun, and now it's not so fun... you start to see people getting hurt."

"It's really hard to concentrate on singing a song when there's a girl or guy in front of you basically in tears because they're in pain because some



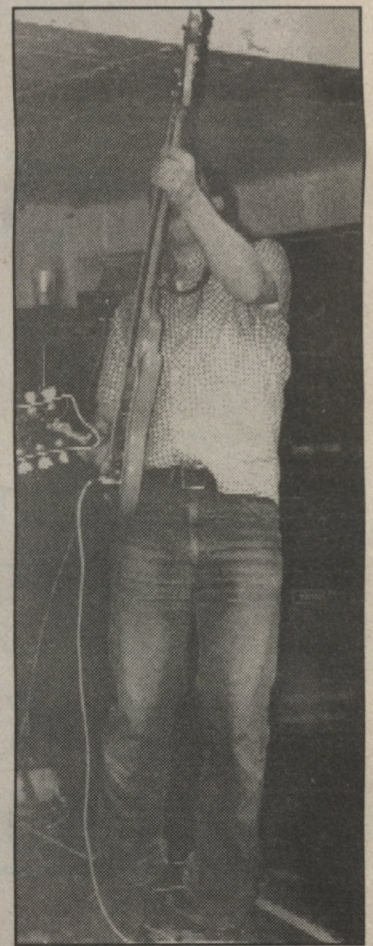
Patrick Pentland of Sloan: "I just want a house in Jamaica."

idiot in combat boots bashed them in the head because he 'wants to have fun.'"

The stance Sloan has taken against violence at shows is becoming a fixture in the media, most recently in the form of a show review describing a band member's retaliation to what was seen as extreme misbehaviour (i.e. swearing and spitting at said band member). This is one of the less glorious parts of the job. Any entertainer eventually finds him- or herself in the spotlight, but this does not always mean justified press. Pentland thinks "people put

way too much credence in critics, for instance record critics -- even if it's a good review."

Good and bad reviews aside, Pentland is happy with the route the band is taking right now, and can't see himself doing anything other than making music. "My whole rationale is that if I fail [it's okay because] I could never live my life if I always had to say to myself, 'I could have done that, but I didn't.'"



Ian McGettigan of Thrush Hermit, man behind the myth.

Next week: an interview with the mighty Thrush Hermit.