

Confed Center Hosts Barra MacNeils



Photo By Keith Caborn

by Lorne Caborn

On Monday, March 11, the popular Cape Breton entertainers the Barra MacNeils swung into town on the Island leg of their Maritime tour. The group has been all over Canada, Scotland and England promoting their latest release, *The Question*.

A capacity crowd poured into the Confederation Centre of the Arts in Charlottetown to witness a flawless performance put on by the group. From the opening instrumental, the group went through set after set smoothly, not allowing the reserved, yet appreciative, crowd to catch their breath. They did take time out, however, to apologize not being able to accept their East Coast Music Award in person. The group was on the West Coast portion of their tour.

Good things come to those who wait, though, and it was no different on

Monday. The group balanced their set well with old favorites such as "My Heart Is In The Highlands" and "Celebrate", to new songs, like "Myopic" and the title track from *The Question*. Unfortunately the newer songs weren't as well received and the crowd never got into it. When attending a Cape Breton concert, hand-clapping, foot stomping and dancing in the aisles are definite musts to truly appreciate the experience. Much to my personal dismay, none of this was present on Monday night.

Everyone still left smiling so perhaps the next time the groups comes to play a more energetic crowd will be here to receive them. One thing is certain though -- if you want to be part of that crowd, make sure you get your ticket early, because they'll be going even faster next time.



Highland Hights at The Barn Photo by Lorne Caborn

SOUND BITES

The Refreshments
Fizzy, Fuzzy Big & Buzzy
(Polygram/Mercury)

The Refreshments, with their self-described sarcastic pop style, show potential on their CD *Fizzy, Fuzzy Big & Buzzy*. With some solid rock riffs on most of the songs and serious to just plain silly lyrics I wouldn't put them into any musical category. They're different and the CD is really easy to listen to, so check it out if you're into new styles of music.

Buffy Sainte-Marie
Up Where We Belong
(EMI)

Born on a reservation in Saskatchewan, this award-winning artist has just released her greatest hits album. Most of the tracks have a classic country or folk feel to them. On some of the tracks she mixes in 'powwow' music and achieves little success. I didn't really like any of the other tracks either however including her release of the song she wrote for *An Officer And A Gentleman*, "Up Where We Belong." Avoid this one unless you're a huge fan.

Gren
Camp Grenada
(Attic/IRS)

What is Gren, you might ask? Well, according to lead singer and guitarist Brett White, "It's the sound of your thumb being stuck in a doorjamb." I'd rather have my entire head stuck in a doorjamb than listen to this CD again. With loud noise being played over stupid lyrics I couldn't find anything positive about this CD other than the fact that I may be able to prevent others to listening to it.

Highland Heights

The Highland Heights played before a capacity crowd on Saturday, March 16. They started playing at lunch, and the appreciative fans stayed right with them until the very end, at least the ones who were still standing. Singing during the traditional favorites and clapping and cheering during the others, the fans were almost as energetic as the band. The Cape Breton group proved they belong on the top of the Maritime music scene as all those who braved the storm caught one of the best shows at the barn this year. Lets hope they come back soon, and that we've all recovered in time.

The Harvest
Soundtrack
(True North Records)

The movie was originally released in 1993 and the CD contains never before released tracks from Sky Cries Mary, Low Pop Suicide and The Elastic Purejoy.

It's not really bad or really good, it's really just... there. That and it's really weird. Lots of instrumentals are included in between the other tracks so if you're into that kind of thing, which I'm not, then this CD may be for you. It certainly wasn't for me.

Brand New Heavies
Excursions
(EMI/Capitol)

The hip hop/jazz group The Brand New Heavies has been featured on such notable CDs such as the *Higher Learning* soundtrack. Their latest release contains some of their remixes and rare grooves. Most of the work on this one contains the retro seventies feel they've made popular on past CDs. It's a pretty good CD, but unfortunately it wasn't my style.

Iggy Pop
Naughty Little Doggie
(Virgin)

Iggy Pop, the music icon who has been around since the late sixties, doesn't break any new ground on his latest offering, *Naughty Little Doggie*. It is a solid effort with a good mix of the punk/thrash/metal style he's known for but really nothing new. Fans of the Chili Peppers and the Sex Pistols might want to pick this one up if for some reason they've got money and nothing else better to spend it on.

Jaw
Motor City Sleeps
(Spock 5 Records)

On his solo debut, Jaw stumbles his way through both good and bad music. His guitar driven rock sounds like The Rembrandts on some tracks and dying cats on others. Each time I found myself enjoying one song I found myself hating another, especially "Driving Down To Vegas". An Elvis impersonator he isn't, and unfortunately he's not a very good musician either.

**BY
LORNE
CABORN**