



Left: Hamilton's JUNKHOUSE, who played Myron's Oct. 30

Below: The Latest Junkhouse Release, *Birthday Boy* (Sony/Epic)



Sound Bites

by Lorne Caborn

Welcome to another edition of Sound Bites where I trash every CD that can be trashed. Up first on the garbage list is Spooky Ruben and their CD *Modes of Transportation Vol.1*. My first impression was that Raffi had just cut a really bad alternative disc. After further analysis however I realized these guys are just doing a real bad impression of Weezer, so now I just pray they don't release *Vol.2*.

I did manage to enjoy most of John of Mark and his self-titled new CD. He creates songs with a Tragically Hip flavour and his lyrics are good as well. If you like The Hip or that style then this one could be for you!

After listening to John of Mark it was refreshing to get back to the bad music, this time supplied by The Smalls. Their latest disc *Waste And Tragedy* tells the entire story and whether you class it as thrash or metal it just blows, big time!

The soundtrack to *Seven* offered some salvation as it has some good cuts on it. It would be hard not to enjoy this as it contains styles of music from jazz to classical to alternative. This, of course, also takes away from the CD unless you have vast musical interests.

Another soundtrack just released does stick to one style, the sixties and seventies. *Dead Presidents* contains artists such as James Brown, Barry White, and Aretha Franklin, making this a must for any Motown collection. With great artists such as these on the soundtrack I'm sure the movie will be just as good. I'm through hacking and slashing for this week but I'll be back next issue checking them out so you don't have to.

Big Audio Dynamite
Planet BAD/ Greatest Hits

A greatest hits collection from a band that never actually had a great hit. If you ever needed a reason to hate 80s music, just listen to this CD. The only song I even remotely recognized was "Rush", which I remember from the movie *So I Married an Axe Murderer*. Ironically, most of these songs contain clips from movies within the songs (for no apparent reason, except to distract from the horrible 80s synth-pop beat). Another theatrical connection -- all of these songs sound as though they could be played during the closing credits of any comedy made in the 80s. Unless you're a die-hard fan of Big Audio Dynamite, beware of this CD. (1.5)

— Joel Gillespie

Junkhouse Rocked Charlottetown... But Nobody Noticed

by Mike F. Beagan

Last Monday, October 30, one of Canada's hottest touring acts played Myron's Upstairs. Junkhouse was in town to support their new album, *Birthday Boy*, and they put on a great show. Unfortunately for them, the crowd that showed up at Myron's was not one of PEI's best. I'll explain that later -- first things first, you know.

The show started around 10:00 pm with a 45 minute set from the Barstool Prophets. The Prophets are also supporting a new album, *Crunk*. They play a high energy guitar-driven style of rock that is quite pleasing, and very complimentary to Junkhouse's sound.

A skilfully played double-edged guitar attack was underscored by a rock-steady rhythm section that you could set your watch to. Most interesting was the avant guard lyrics, such as those to "Short and Curlies", a song that the lead singer announced was about the time that he "shaved off all of his pubic hair and made a sculpture out of it."

Despite the energy of the music and the band's repeated attempts to get the crowd's attention, the few spectators there did little but stare at the stage. A small crowd, including Junkhouse guitarist Dan Achen, was huddled around the bar TV set watching the referendum results roll in.

After a short break, and the announcement of a No referendum victory, Junkhouse took the stage. They launched their set with a supersonic version of "Be Someone", from *Birthday Boy*, followed by the better known "Praying for the Rain", and "Gimme the Love" from their

gold selling previous album *Strays*. The crowd was either suffering from referendum hangover or somebody was slipping valium in the beer, because there was no response other than a shuffling to see the stage better, and some feeble attempts at applause between songs.

Outspoken vocalist Tom Wilson was less than impressed, to say the least. He halted the set to announce that "this is our first trip to PEI and we love this place, but so far this gig f---in' sucks. . . if you want it to past the next three songs, I suggest that you get off your asses." I'm paraphrasing, but you get the idea. He then preceded to practically beg for people to come up to the front of the stage and dance. Next he compared the crowd to a bunch of hockey parents staring over the boards.

"I don't know if I'm at a kids hockey game or a rock and roll show." Then, after insisting that the bar TVs be shut off, he told the zombie-like crowd what he thought about the Quebec question. "If I lived with a woman and she wanted to leave, then hey, you wanna leave, great: you're not getting my CDs, my cutlery, my Hendrix pictures on the wall. . . just go and stop f---ing nagging me."

The crowd began to wake up a little during the fourth song, and a few did join the band on the front of the stage, but they didn't actually start to move around at all until the fifth of sixth tune. Eventually, a mosh pit of about five brave souls started, while a half a dozen more actually danced to the music.

It was all pretty sad, and infuriating for the band. Wilson and company tried

many tactics to get a reaction from the crowd, including teasing, antagonizing, and threats, but in the end Prince Edward Island meekness won out. The band finished their 75 minute set and left the stage in disgust. Proper thing, I say. If they are ever brave enough to come to PEI again, and I hope that they are, they should come to the UPEI Barn where they would get a crowd that actually wants to be entertained.

Junkhouse is a powerhouse of a rock band. Big bottom end bass from Russ Wilson, and sledgehammer drumming by Ray Ferrugia are the solid base upon which the heavy blues music is based. Guitarist Dan Achen seems to prefer traditional methods of sound manipulation for creating the fuzzy, garage-funk howls of guitar prowess that have made the band one of Canada's best. Anybody can stomp an effects pedal, but it takes a guitarist of true skill to wrench and abuse those sounds from a guitar by manual manipulation. Tom Wilson, although he insists the label makes him "feel pretentious", is the poet-singer-songwriter that makes Junkhouse tick so beautifully. His "semi-autobiographical" lyrics and demon howl vocals are trademarks for the band.

The new Junkhouse album, *Birthday Boy* (Sony/Epic), is simply fantastic. Honest, well played, and infectious, I recommend it highly to any fans of loud, meaningful music. They record many of their tracks live off the studio floor, effectively capturing the feel of their shows. As *Birthday Boy* was recorded on the heels of playing over 300 shows in 18 months, it is a very well made record. The album also features Sarah McLachlan on "Burned Out Car". Go get it and play it loud.