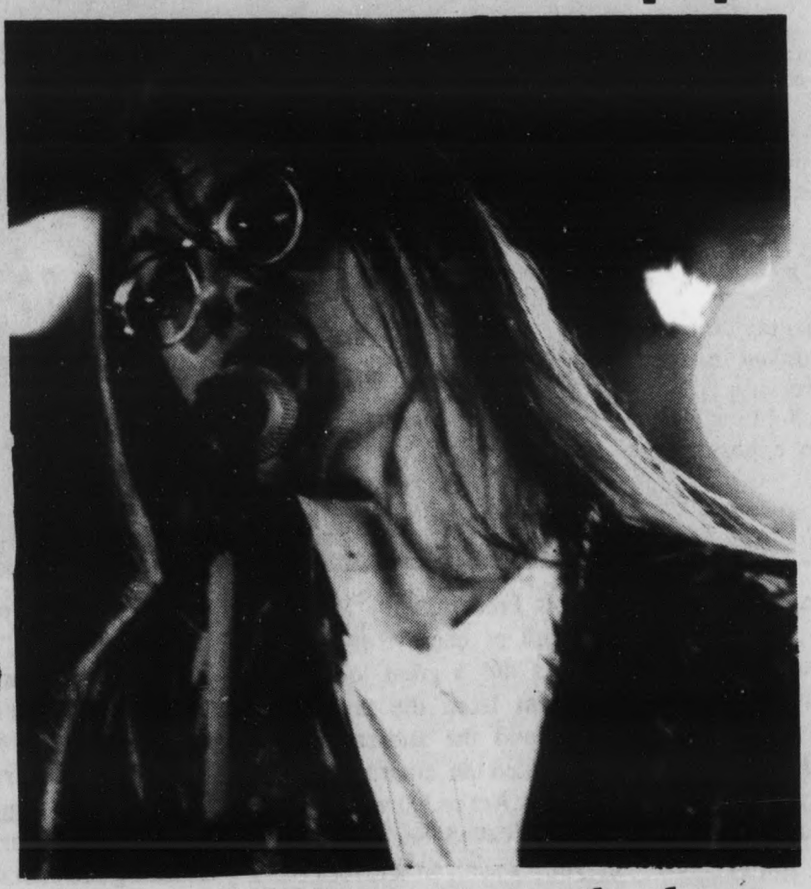



# Pursuit Ends in Disappointment

**Before moving to Fredericton to gets (sic) educated, I lived in the world-class city of Toronto for a few years. It was there that I achieved total intellectual and spiritual fulfillment while working at the big A & A record store on Yonge St. I'm sure you're all familiar with the store—whenever some cheesy television producer wants to portray Toronto as sin-city they film it's flashy neon exterior ( I guess the Bible goes into great detail as to how this type of illuminated advertising flourished in Sodom and Gomorrah just before the fall).**

I worked on the classical music floor, where a great deal of my time was spent breaking up confrontations between rival gangs of opera studs. Their arguements as to who was the supreme tenor, Domingo or Pavarotti, would almost always end in knife fights. In spite of the violence, it was a great place to work, because each day held out the possibility of a "brush with greatness." Almost all the staff of the store were struggling young musicians desperate for that break that would thrust them into the Big Time (with the exception of yours truly, who really isn't capable of much more than working a cash register). The music scene in Hog Town is littered with the ravaged carcasses of poor dreamers from Crib Death Manitoba with funny haircuts, who hope to be the next Glass Tiger. Though few made it, everyone at the store took solace in the fact that Dave down in shipping was finally making it big time as the drummer with The Pursuit of Happiness.

Yep, I used to work in the same building as Dave. I remember one day going down to the basement to unload some garbage, and their he was, sitting there not really doing anything, just like most Canadians. I tried to act cool, like it was no big deal.



***oop...ack..baby I wanna be home in bed...***

"Hi Dave" I stammered, "is this where the garbage goes?"

"Yep." He answered with perfect timing (my only other "brush with greatness" was the time I walked into the changeroom at a tennis club, and there was Frank Mahavolich, as the good Lord intended him. Naked. I still can't figure out why they call him The Big M).

So I have (loosely) followed TPOH's development since the release of their first single "I'm an Adult Now." I remember the time Erica Ehm introduced one of their videos by calling them the second ugliest band in the world, still well behing the Pogues. The band seemed thudding rhythm section, which is anchored by my very good friend Dave. The sound is flushed out by two wonderful female backing vocalists, who add a lush fullness to otherwise basic numbers.

The first two albums by TPOH were produced bys Todd Rundgren. They are both well produced, almost too smooth. The band has been labelled the "Archies of the 90's", most likely because of this sticky sweet smoothness. I was curious as to how they would sound without the pasturizing effect of the studio. I also hoped that my brother-like closeness with Dave would translate into free drinks.

Although I ended up paying for my drinks, I won't let this oversight poison my review. Beg's songs work well live, keeping their tone while gaining an edge. His voice, particularly on the more vocally demanding tunes like "She's so Young" loses quite a bit of body—perhaps the rigors of touring are wearing it thin. The slack was taken up by the harmonies, which sent a tingle through my soon-to-be-middle-aged body.

There was but one problem with the whole affair, two if you count my having to pay for drinks. The band really didn't display much enthusiasm. Quite a few people seemed to have the distinct impression that TPOH would liked to have been back at the Wa vi-brating on Magic Fingers. This quite naturally left some disgruntled fans well, disgruntled. And well they should be — if you're going to accept peoples hard-earned student loan money (right) you should be professional enough to do more than just go through the motions. Sorry Dave, but it had to be said; that's just the kind of righteous guy I am.

Finally, I'd like to congratulate the Student Union for a job well done. There has been an impressive array of top-notch live music on campus this autumn, and the student body is responding with enthusiasm. Perhaps this year's freshmen are just a bit more dedicated to having fun than those that preceded them.

