ENTERTAINMENT



photo by K. Rainville

WHILE THE THOMAS TRIO PLAYS TO DAUGHTERS AND SONS, TPOH LEAVES THE QUESTION: ARE THEY ADULTS NOW OR JUST OLD?

by Lilith

"Welcome to the Chill on the Hill," quipped shivering Thomas Trio front man Jody Richardson. While the act opening last Saturday's Frosh Week concert suited up in the red "Thrill on the Hill" sweats of the Orientation staff, Richardson suggested the audience hop around a lot for warmth (cold snaps have been plaguing this event for the past few years, which makes the suggestion of moving the concert indoors attractive). The crowd also followed Richardson's beat in "Sun Rising," leaving him to marvel that "all you've got to do to get people to like your song is to put clapping in it.."

Although the St. John's natives have only one album (released about nine months ago), they have a well developed style for a young band. Richardson's voice is strong and flexible and he frequently improvises. Their music is upbeat, has a vague reggae flavor and their tunes are infectious (three of the people I went to the concert with have sought out their CD because they couldn't get the songs out of their head). If you haven't checked out Thomas Trio and the Red Albino already, do it.

The Pursuit of Happiness's set was disappointing (although not actually because it was aborted medias res). Personally I think that the concert's crowd control problems were phermone related; there were a bunch of drunk high school kids in the front rows and they were probably set off because lead singer Moe Berg sounded like he was going through puberty again with his voice was cracking all over the place. Overall, the band sounded pretty tired and looked sick of doing Frosh concerts all week. Calling off their set was a mercy kill. Nuff said.

OUR MAD HATTER CATCHES UP WITH THE 'TEA PARTY' IN SAINT JOHN

And you thought the good old days of rock were gone! Well, The Tea Party have made sure the good times still roll. After an unscheduled acoustic performance at Rye's Deli (in Fredericton) on August 31, '93, one had to wonder what the electric portion would sound like. Bring on the Hideaway Club in St. John, N.B. where the band played to a very enthusiastic and appreciative crowd. The concert got underway at a little after ten o'clock, but the crowd was in good "spirits" throughout the whole concert. The moment the band members walked onto the stage, many people were making comparisons of lead singer Jeff Martin to the Door's lead singer Jim Morrison. But then again, think about it for a while - Jeff Martin and Jim Morrison - coincidence with the initials? Who really knows? The other members are Jeff Burrows on the drums and Stuart Chatwood on bass guitar.

The opening song was also the first video done by the band - "The River". One thing that sets this band apart from any other is the fact that they mix eastern cultural sounds and blend it so well with the sounds of the west. After the end of each song, Jeff Martin spoke to the crowd about the spiritual side of life and not to take life so seriously but to have a good time while your at it. Most of the songs were taken from their latest release "Splender Solis" (even though they have their debut release just called "The Tea Party") and boy, can these guys cook! You couldn't help but feel the transcendental effect after each song. The songs were very relaxing to listen to. There were, however, some new songs like "Dreams of Reason" and "Drive Down the Moon" that were introduced and they should have no trouble making the final cuts on their next studio album. Songs that really stuck out were "Under Raven Skies" which is probably Jeff Martin's favorite song for those are the only three words he writes when asked for his autograph. "Sun Going Down" had so much intensity and feel that a mosh pit was formed in front of the stage with stage diving galore! "In This Time", another track off the album, was about "the second coming" according to Jeff Martin. One of my favorites off the album was done to perfection as I myself felt dazed and confused. The track was the instrumental "Winter Solstice" and between you and me, I could have sworn it was Jimmy Page (of Yardbirds, Led Zepplin, The Firm, Coverdale/Page fame) on stage playing that.

Alas, all good things must come to an end and Jeff Martin said that the last song would be a long one. This was also the encore selection where the band got to experiment with their instruments with bongos, guitars mixing boards, and some lyrics. The song was taken from "Splender Solis" and the track was "Save Me". The lights were low, the crowd went nuts as the band members rocked like they never played before. Jeff Martin used a violin bow to play his guitar and the result was a haunting shrill that sent shivers up everyone's spine. Jeff Burrows played the drums like there was no tomorrow - beating and pounding away as if to send signals. Stuart Chatwood alternated the speed on his bass guitar, sometimes slow, other times rapid movement. Quite the sight to see. As the song was over, The Tea Party said their goodbyes and promised that their presence would be felt again.

As a final note, this is a band that is destined for worldwide recognition. If you couldn't see them on this tour, see them whenever you can. It is really an enlightening experience and a truly captivating performance. One of the better bands to come out of Canada in a long time. Buy the CD, you'll know what I mean.

by Tuhin Pal

Harvest Jazz and Blues Festival Starts with a Shuffle

The Hill Brothers and The Shuffle Demons helped kicked off Fredericton's Fourth Annual Harvest Jazz and Blues Festival at the UNB SUB Cafeteria. This marks the first time that the Festival has chosen a venue outside of the downtown area. The Hill Brothers kicked off the show on Wednesday night at 9:00 PM, giving the crowd a taste of blues of a quality rarely seen on this campus. The Shuffle Demons then followed up their triumphant engagement at the Social Club last year with their engaging ride on the Spadina Bus. Also opening up the festival last night were Roger Howse and Poor Charlie at The Dock Pub and The Exchange respectively. Last night the Festival kicked in at full steam, as most downtown watering holes took advantage of this opportunity to promote Fredericton as a cultural centre. The Festival will also be operating a Blues tent on King Street between York and Westmorland Streets. For those of you who are poor, cheap, or don't have your Student Loan yet the Festival is offering free performances at Officer's Square on both Saturday and Sunday.