

A place to park their van and drink

ALISON CLACK
THE BRUNSWICKAN

Sebastien Grainger and the Mountains recently came to Fredericton to play at the Capital Complex's 'Pop Explosion Hits Fredericton.'

The concert series consisted of nearly a week of musical acts, a great number of whom happened to also play in Halifax for the Pop Explosion weekend. The concerts featured artists like Two Hours Traffic, Tom Fun Orchestra, Matthew Barber, and The d'Urbervilles.

The Capital's "Pop Explosion Hits Fredericton" started on Oct. 21, and culminated in the final show on Oct. 28, in which Grainger headlined.

The show, which was on a rainy Tuesday night, had a disappointing turnout for the level of artist that was playing but it didn't seem to deter the band from playing a great show.

The band seemed to be using the show as a chance to have fun and drink. Grainger said at the beginning of the set that the band came because it was an opportunity to park their van and drink.

The band also seemed to use it to



Mike Erb / The Brunswickan

Following up on their explosive performances in Halifax a few days prior, Sebastien Grainger and the Mountains appeared at The Capital on Tuesday, Oct. 28.

check out some of the acts that played before them. Grainger could be seen throughout the show hanging out in the audience and watching both Jellyroll and Owen Steel play before he took the stage.

When Sebastien Grainger and the Mountains did finally take the stage at around 1 a.m. the atmosphere in the bar seemed to change completely. Despite the limited number of people the place seemed to be teeming with energy.

The room became one hot and

sweaty mess of drunken people and wicked music. The band gave the show all they had despite saying they were only there to "park their van and get drunk," according to Grainger.

Throughout the show the band interacted with the audience. Bassist Nick Sewell held his bass out for the audience several times allowing them to hit strings as he strummed.

The band also seemed to be incredibly into their music – not necessarily in a pompous or arrogant way but that they were passionate

about it. Grainger had his eyes closed most of the set; he seemed stuck in the moment in the music.

The CDs and band paraphernalia at the end of the show were almost all gone. The band, however, was willing to stick around, say hi, and sign merchandise for anyone who wanted.

Upcoming shows at the Capital include Stereo Airing and She Roars! on Friday, Nov. 7; & Scott MacDonald, The Names and Faces, and All of Green on Saturday, Nov. 8.

The little black box



POP
TART

Ashley
Bursey

I'm sitting amongst boxes of unpacked clothes in my new room. There's an empty closet in front of me. My bed was haphazardly made up two days ago and my night table is, for the time being, a wooden stool with an alarm clock tossed on top.

But there's one part of my new bedroom that has been, gloriously, unpacked; a shining corner of this room that isn't cluttered with cardboard boxes and dishcloth-wrapped mugs.

This delightful acquisition was a loan from my new landlords; a piece they didn't need, but one that turned out to be the piece de resistance.

Blame *American Dad* or *Family Guy*. I don't even watch *Entourage*, but when Adrian Grenier came on that screen, even Perez Hilton came second – and not because Grenier's particularly handsome, either; I just wanted to see what was up in their version of Hollywoodlandia.

So sue me. I always assumed I was the anti-television; someone who was more into second-hand bookstores than buying DVD seasons of *CSI*. And while I do appreciate a good dose of celebrity culture, I'm more of an Internet junkie than a Tivo whore.

That's why, when September rolled around and I moved from the place I was subletting to a new house that was sans television, I didn't think it would be a big deal. "I hardly ever even watch TV," I scoffed. "I have the Internet in case I want to check out a rerun."

I was dead wrong.

There were nights I would come home to an empty house. My books were sitting, invitingly, on the simple white bookshelf. My computer was

refreshed and ready to serve as my window on the world. I hated it.

It was then I would sit and think about the afternoons I spent painting my toenails and watching terrible reality shows on Slice; the evenings we vegged out to reruns of *The Hills*, or ordered pizza and guiltily pleased the night away to *So You Think You Can Dance*?

So we began a new addiction: video rental. I was never a big movie-watcher, either, but the three-for-\$5 Mondays at a local video store became more and more appealing as my separation from television lengthened.

It got to the point where I was cherishing my minutes on the treadmill at my gym because it allowed me a few precious minutes with my favourite television shows. News programs became Pulitzer-prize worthy; stand-up comics were glowing examples of comedic genius; and even the cheesiest of TV commercials was almost deserving of Superbowl status.

And then, after two months of taking every scrap of television I could get, it happened. I moved from that little North Side apartment to a place in downtown Fredericton, where my monthly rent actually includes (gasp) cable – and my landlords offered me this spare television they were planning to put in storage.

Of course, I accepted. Myself and another coworker had been discussing it; we were sick of being left out of this fictional world inside these little black boxes. She said she was about to make the plunge to get cable; I told her my new place was already good to go. "Cable tonight!" I cheered. I was surprised at my own readiness to embrace television, but prepared to accept my obvious dependence on late-night sitcoms and *Entertainment Tonight*.

I'm a pop culture addict. While I'll never give up my TMZ, I guess it's true: I want my, I want my MTV after all.

Ashley Bursey is the former Arts Editor of *The Brunswickan*.

Old music, new musicians

ALISON CLACK
THE BRUNSWICKAN

Some old time music came alive in Fredericton only this past Monday, Oct. 27.

That was the day that Jill Barber started off her Maritime tour in Fredericton. The opening show was not without problems however; the stop was originally scheduled for Sunday, Oct. 26, but was rescheduled due to a power outage in parts of the downtown area.

No one in the crowd seemed bothered or daunted about coming back to the show at the Playhouse once the concert started.

The opening act was modern crooner Royal Wood. This singer-songwriter kept the audience interested throughout by telling jokes and personal stories related to his songs.

One story was how he wrote a song about his parent's love when he was asked for a song to play when his brother's to-be wife would walk down the aisle. The stories helped the listener feel a connection to his songs and truly endeared the audience to him.

His slightly awkward, quirky sense of humour also endeared

the audience between songs but the quirkiness could be seen in the songs he did play. At one point in the show Wood played one of the songs from Willy Wonka, updating it but still giving that eccentric feeling of a dozen Oompa-Loompas singing at you.

After a short intermission Jill Barber took the stage. She opened her set with her new album's title track, 'Chances.'

Barber's music was a step back into time with a big band jazzy style mixed with a little of her classic folk. The quality of her singing rivaled that of a recording.

In addition to her great performance Barber showed throughout that she was very

humble and grateful to the audience. She thanked the audience several times for the audience coming back despite the blackout the previous night.

Her thankfulness extended to the previous night as well. Barber greeted all of the show-goers on the steps of the Playhouse the night of the power-out, thanking them for coming out and talking with fans.

The giving spirit crept into the dedication of one of her songs; Barber thanked all of the loves of her life (as, if it hadn't been for them, she could not have written all of her love songs).

The mix of classic music, talented musicians, humbleness, and good storytelling made this into a great show for music lovers.



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