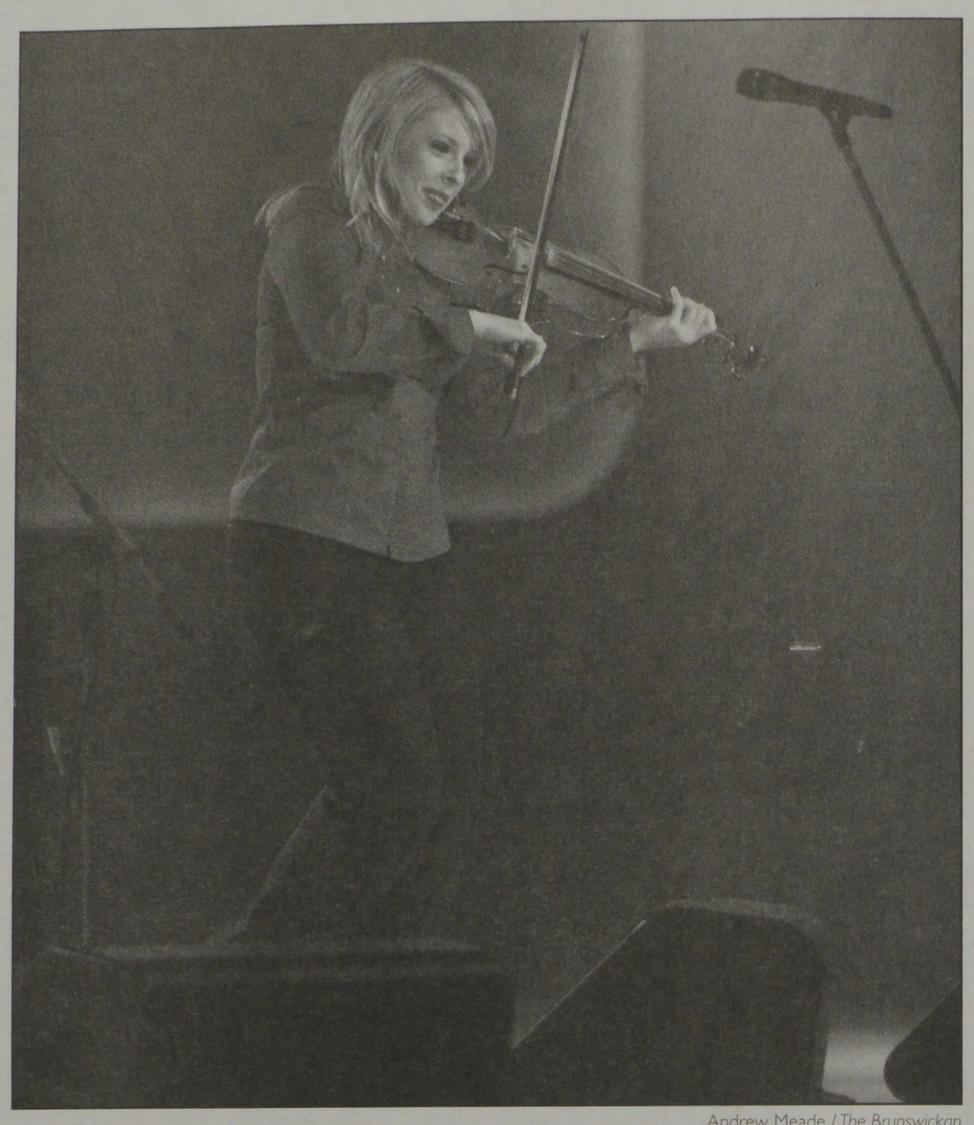
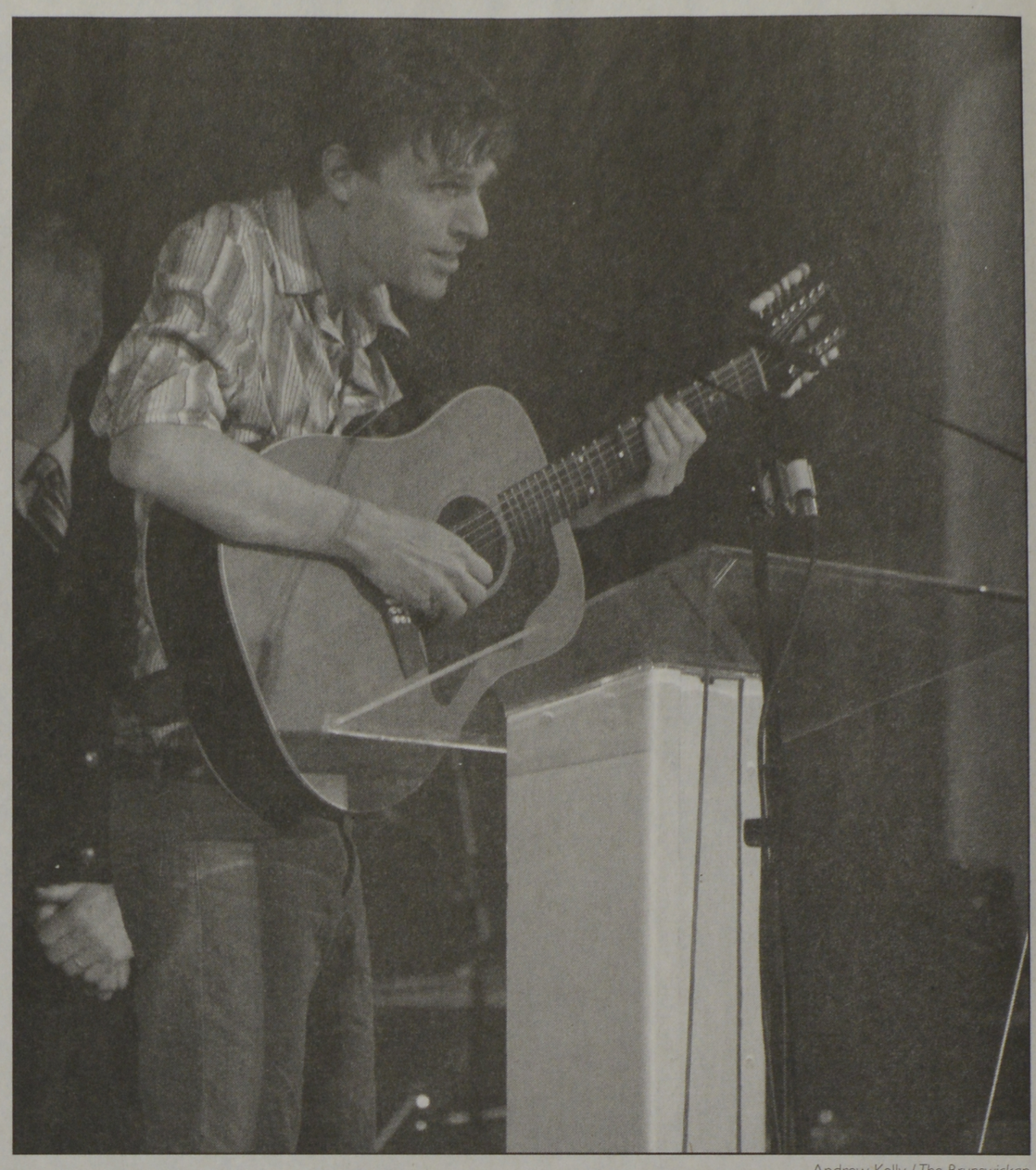
Fashionably East Coast,



Andrew Meade / *The Brunswickan*

Samantha Robichaud shared the stage with Chris Colepaugh and Thom Swift for a rollicking performance during the 2008 East Coast Music Awards Gala.



Andrew Kelly / *The Brunswickan*

Joel Plaskett accepts his fourth - or was it fifth? - ECMA of the night for Vibe Creative Group Single of the Year. "I feel so foolish for winning so many awards," he sang. "I hope you don't get bored!" The Joel Plaskett Emergency performed shortly after.

Hold Me in Your Arms

by Naomi Osborne

8:30: The girls and I got out of class early and began our pre-game for the concert that really did "rock the hill."

For what was supposed to be a three-hour night class, I got out surprisingly early. I was so stoked that a couple of my girlfriends and I headed over to a party where we got ready for the stellar concert that was about to take place at the SUB building.

Yes, you guessed it – it was the "Rock the Hill" concert that took place last Thursday night. Just having the ECMAs in Freddy this year was excitement enough, but having access to all the amazing bands right here on campus was even better.

My girlfriends and I started the night early and went to the Social Club for cheap drinks before the concert even started at 10. The night seemed rather casual but it was easy to tell there was excitement brewing in the air.

For those who didn't get a chance to make it out to hear the seven amazing bands, you really missed out. In order to accommodate all the bands, two concert venues were set up in the ballroom upstairs and the cafeteria downstairs.

10-ish: Slowcoaster kick-started the show downstairs in the cafeteria; they were followed by Grand Theft Bus and the night ended with Wintersleep. Meanwhile, the bands Hey Rosetta!, Two Hours Traffic, The Tom Fun Orchestra, and The Trews rocked the building upstairs.

I began my night off downstairs watching Slowcoaster. I immediately noticed how the giant crowd began to swarm in and how the under-aged and non-drinking students were sectioned to a caged off area, like animals.

I found this rather shocking and surprising as they were only given a small section of the floor, which was right next to a giant pillar that obstructed their view of the stage. In my opinion, it could have been set up a bit better so these students could actually see the stage, especially for a campus-oriented show.

Upstairs, the scene was much different. Here, the under-aged students had the whole front area to enjoy the band, and rightly so; that is where a large portion of the crowd ended up.

Hey Rosetta! put on an amazing performance and they really got the crowd going so that we were all prepared and itching for the other bands to come on. But I am not here to talk about the other bands that performed that night – I'm writing about the amazing performance The Trews put on.

In fact, the first two bands were so good, the crowd broke out in shouts while they waited for The Trews to come onstage. By this time, the entire upstairs was completely full – so full, in fact, that security had to lock the doors and not let anyone else in.

1-ish: Trews time: The lights dimmed onstage and bluish purple lights shot out as The Trews began playing to large cheers from the crowd. Guitar squeals, drum percussions, and keyboard notes filled the large room as the band began their segment.

The crowd went absolutely wild. It was blatantly obvious they had all been waiting for The Trews to come onstage the entire night, and explains why they were nominated for Artist of the Year for their album, "Den of Thieves."

As I looked around, I remember seeing two guys who caught my attention at the very front of the stage screaming, singing, and jumping around to the music with every ounce of energy they had in them. This was great and in my opinion, everyone should have had as much enthusiasm as these two guys did.

The band continued their performance playing popular songs like "Not Ready to Go," "Tired of Waiting," "So She's Leaving," and "Poor Ol' Broken Hearted Me." I've been to a lot of concerts, and I must say that I was impressed with their performance. They really knew how to work the crowd and the stage, plus their music is great as well.

Outside, the whole SUB was in complete and utter chaos. There were people lined up on the stairwells trying to get in to see The Trews play. Downstairs was completely packed to capacity, and the set-up of the entire concert scene seemed very unorganized.

I know that it was put on mostly by ECMA volunteers and overall, they did a good job, but it was difficult to find out anything, including which band was playing where and when. Even the event workers and volunteers didn't have a clue.

There were no signs saying which bands were playing in the ballroom and which ones were in the cafeteria, so we mainly had to fend for ourselves in a crowd of about 2,000 people and hope that we didn't miss our favourite band performing.

But in the end, the actual concert and the bands' performances made up for everything else.



Andrew Meade (1, 3-6) & Doug Estey (2) / The Brunswickan

Vaudevillian cluster rock

by Ashley Bursey

10:30-ish: Prepped and primed to go, we managed to miss both Slowcoaster and Hey Rosetta!

We arrived a bit late, I'm not gonna lie. We knew beers would be expensive and decided to pre-drink before the show to loosen things up a bit for some of the most danceable and über-fun bands to be hitting Freddy this ECMA weekend. And we arrived precisely at 10:30, figuring Sloco would be a little bit late (and, personally, being devastated about having missed Hey Rosetta!, the hometown favorites from Newfoundland) but pretty much ready to rock.

Unfortunately, our plans were vastly interrupted by the fact that we couldn't figure out how to get in the door. I had my media pass, but I was with some friends who were on a guest list. We arrived downstairs, itching to see Sloco, and were told, after waiting in line, that we had to traipse around the building to the front door to actually get signed in and get stamped.

So we did. It took us another few misguided directions to actually find this elusive list, and then we had to get stamped, and the wait in line again just to get inside. Not the best organizational setup, but then again, it was several thousand drunken students and a rowdy concert – perhaps a bit of a recipe for disaster.

We get inside and I order a Rockstar, mistakenly thinking it had vodka in it. ("What a sweet deal – only three-fiddy!") Not so. I had to go purchase a four-dollar vodka shot, as well, to mix with my Rockstar. I was thoroughly unimpressed.

And we missed Sloco.

11:30-ish….maybe. We grabbed some beers and decided to take a jaunt upstairs to see a band I've been psyched about seeing for ages: The Tom Fun Orchestra. Having interviewed Tom himself (his name is really Ian), I absolutely loved the tunes and the personality of this super-group (can we say nine-piece?) and arrived just in time to catch some huge crowd favorites.

My compadres headed beer-wise to replenish and I stayed in the front row by myself, rocking out to some of the best and most danceable tunes I've heard in a long time. Perhaps I got a few weird looks. In fact, I definitely did. But the band was freaking awesome – "Check out the left-handed banjo player!" our News Editor exclaimed – from both a technical and a music-ingénue standpoint. Huge crowds and a great set-up (the front row was reserved for those of us not likely to spill beer on the musicians) made for one kickass show.

"It's kitchen punk," Tom-slash-Ian told me on a phone chat a few weeks before the big night, as he was heading to the band's CD release party for "You Will Land with a Thud." "It doesn't really mean anything. I don't think any description of a band really means anything. We used to call ourselves vaudevillian cluster rock, but we thought it was misleading."

Whatever they are, it's hella fun. As I rock out by myself in a crowd of thousands, I recall asking him what the songs were about.

"I sing about all kinds of things. It's all a figment of my imagination. I'm looking at our CD right now," he told me. "There's a song about a guy and a horse, about a dog, about a group of people who live at the bottom of a river, and there's a love song, and a song about little tiny people flying through the air. I have an active imagination. I don't know what literary influences I would cite from my childhood, other than those Mr. Men books. I like Mr. Muddle, because I felt it was semi-biographical."

I run to get a beer and join my fellow rockers behind the barricade in the beer tent, where I promptly step on about eight people's feet and spill beer on another four as I proceed to vigorously enjoy Tom Fun. They were definitely the highlight of the night for me (I liked Two Hours Traffic, but thought Wintersleep's show was half-assed and typical) and I can't wait to see them again.

As Ian told me, laughing, on the phone: "Fredericton, we can't wait to do it to your eardrums." And man, Tom Fun definitely did.