

# Entertainment Outlook

## Rockin' and rollin' and a whole lot more

By DIAHANN NADEAU

Last Tuesday night I threw caution and common sense to the dogs and attended my first rock concert.

Although I am in my thirties (early thirties - really), I had never gotten the nerve or the ambition to head out to a concert, no matter how much I liked the performer.

Now I know why I waited so long - there was sex and drugs and rock and roll all right - all in the next seat!

What fun. Who did I see? One of the Gods of rock, the former lead singer of Led Zeppelin, Robert Plant.

It's probably a mistake to go see, in your doddering old age (that's how I felt), a hard rocker - Zeppelin having been the premiere hard rock band way back when. A performer like that attracts more of the least attractive fans around. At one point Plant talked about his 'trepidation at going on another tour' and I doubt that three or four of the audience knew what trepidation meant. You don't need a college education to be a rock fan. (Just think of all the money I've wasted.)

All this took place at Maple Leaf Gardens, that intimate, cosy little theatre that just invites you to strain your eyes and get a migraine.

At one point in the proceedings an announcement was made: "Thank you for not smoking." Ha ha ha. Anything that could be smoked was smoked. I had forgotten how cloying the smell of pot is. People usually don't smoke it at the opera.

Another thing I have never seen at the opera or even at the Cultural Centre: couples attempting to have sex during a performance... in the seat next to you... while smoking pot.

It was enchanting, I must say. I kept waiting for this couple to set themselves on fire. They were so stoned that I doubt they actually realized Plant was on stage. Gee, what a good way to waste \$30. I think it could have been done for much less at home! By the way, the girl on the other side of me did manage to

burn me with her cigarette. But hey, she did apologize. It was more than I expected at that point.

So, you ask, what about the show? How about Robert Plant? Plant was great. He looks really good, handsome and fit, and his voice still sounds great (if you liked it in the first place). He was very polished, very professional. He did some Led Zeppelin tunes like Misty Mountain Hop, which had the crowd on its feet.

I loved it, but I was glad that he didn't do more of the old songs - the audience was simply too carried away at that point. Everybody was standing and one's view was blocked. Of course, the couple in the next seat didn't stand. I don't think they noticed they couldn't see anything.

Most of the songs were from his new album, 'Now and Zen'. But he did sing 'The Big Log' (my favorite Plant song) and 'Little by Little' as well as some other things from earlier records. He wrapped up with a killer version of 'Break on Through to the Other Side'. It was great.

Stevie Ray Vaughn did a very tight and impressive opening hour. He has just completed two years of sobriety and relatively clean living. He encouraged the audience to 'take care of themselves' and follow his example. Plant was drinking Perrier water on stage at one point. Times have changed! Being 40 rather than 20 probably makes a lot of difference.

So, will I ever go to another rock concert? (Who cares?)

I suppose I will, if it is someone I truly worship and drool over. Otherwise it wouldn't be worth the frustration. I did see Plant close up though - on our way up Yonge St. Plant's limo passed us. The window was partially open and we saw him push his hand through his hair. We knew it was him, we recognized the hair. Be still my beating heart. No, that's Sting. Ah well, at least I have at last passed one of the rites of puberty. Maybe I'll try guzzling beer until I'm unconscious next - another rite of passage I missed.

## 3rd Degree aims for the top

By JAMIE HARRISON

The local band 3rd Degree recently won the "Band Wars" at the Brampton nightclub, Hotrocks. In a recent interview the band members told of their experiences with the band and commented on the future of the group.

Could I get a brief history of the band?

Todd Corney: The band started out about three years ago and we were just doing it mainly for fun then and then we left those guys (their old lineup), because we wanted to do something more serious. So we joined up with a couple of people, the drummer was from town and the singer was from Ottawa, and he was amazing, but he moved back to Ottawa, so we had to get rid of him. Then we got a singer from Toronto but he didn't work out after a while so we had to move on, then we had to pick up another drummer cuz our old one wasn't working out, then we picked up a new singer, and that's what we have today.

How long has this lineup been together?

Mark Ashley: Seriously, three months. The first month we spent foolin' around.

Has the exposure from the "Band Wars" helped create an interest in the band?

Todd Corney: Yeah... I think it's helped to open our eyes to what we're doing, we're aware of what our potential is now and what we can do. I think it just makes us want to do all that much more.

Mark Ashley: We sorta had breaks at the battle of the bands (Band Wars), cuz there was a lot of bands that didn't show up and there was bands that played one night and won, but due to differences of musicians just parted their ways and never really returned. So that was an advantage for us.

What are the band's main influences?

Todd: Everybody's got their own influences. I think this is what gives the band its uniqueness. For any band to make it they've gotta be unique. If you've got a good combination that works well together, you're gonna make it.



What's the ratio of cover songs to originals in a live set?

Dean Hughes: I'd say a quarter of a show is original.

How serious is the band? Are you willing to take it "all the way"?

Todd: We're willing to go all the way, I think. I am, anyway.

Dean: It all depends on how things go. There are no egos in the band...

Rob Kemp: What... did you leave yours at home tonight (haha).

How would the band describe their music?

Dean: Middle of the road. Commercial, but not too commercial.

Todd: If you took away the keyboards, you'd have a good hard rock song, but what makes it more commercial is the keyboards. Just the addition of the keyboards has made us more danceable.

Mark: We're starting to get out of writing about relationships, and love

and downfalls are everything.

Todd: We're like 3rd Degree, we've got our own original sound, so come out and hear us.

What are your future plans?

Todd: With the studio time that we won we're gonna go in and get a good demo-tape done. Joey Vendetta (Q-107 DJ) was at a bar we once played, and he said that once you guys get a demo-tape going, bring it down and we'll play it for ya!

The way things are happening for 3rd Degree, you'd better check 'em out at a bar soon, or possibly at the Gardens in the foreseeable future.

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## Topical collecting conference

The Canadian Stamp Dealers Association will be playing host to the 39th Annual Convention of the American Topical Association, during their first Annual Postage Stamp Show and Philatelic Exhibition to be held June 17-19 at the Sheraton Centre, 123 Queen St. West, in Toronto.

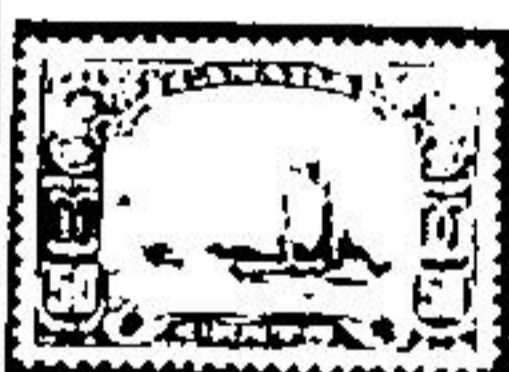
Topical collecting (collecting by a topic or theme, such as Automobiles, Trains, Explorers, Maps, Animals, etc.) has rapidly expanded over the past few years, and at the Exhibition in Toronto, some 200 frames of exhibits are being shown by members

of the American Topical Association.

This will be the first annual show of the Canadian Stamp Dealers Association, which is the profes-

sional trade organization for Stamp Dealers in Canada, with members in Canada, the U.S. and abroad. Future Canada-wide regional shows are being planned, with the main object being the promotion of Stamp Collecting across the country, organization of stamp clubs in schools, youth groups, etc.

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