# LET'S GO! STREET SCENE

Sue Mason, Editor
953-2105
Christina Fuoco, Music Writer
953-2130

**Music Notes**

Christina Fuoco

## *Finney's closes doors to bands*

After serving the local and national music scene for more than five years, Finney's Pub abruptly closed its doors Wednesday, Oct. 19. Owner Paul Judd sold the bar to Dejohn Mafale, formerly of the Whitney, Rattlesnake Club and Park Place restaurants. He and ex-Whitney sous chef Werner "Ogo" Dalkan are renovating the main and upper floors and plan on opening a restaurant in April that is "a lot more upper scale than Finney's," catering toward Orchestra Hall patrons, Mafale said.

The cozy pub closed without notice, infuriating bands and Sue Summers of Static Network who has booked gigs at the club for five years. She had bands scheduled to play there through November. Summers sent out letters to the press lambasting Judd for not notifying her of the closing until around Oct. 21. Bands like Majesty Crush, Goober & The Peas, Cathouse, Tsunami, and Heatmiser started off their careers there.

Summers was still reeling from the events and was uncomfortable talking about it. Mafale, a friend of Summers, feels for her.

"I can understand why she was upset but there was nothing that could be done. You can't let the whole world know that you might close. He'd have no business," Mafale said. Judd has moved to northern Michigan and was unavailable for comment.

Despite having record support for the first time, punk rockers Gas Huffer will be happy to get home.

"In six weeks, we'll be home for one week. We'll work on repairing our relationships," said a groggy, half-asleep Don Blackstone, bassist and backing vocalist.

Gas Huffer is one of the long list of acts on Epitaph Records' roster who are earning respect since the success of labelmates the Offspring. Blackstone said there's no animosity between any of the bands on the label.

"I'm real happy for The Offspring. Their success is trickling down to us. I've got nothin' bad to say about the Offspring," he said.

The band will visit the area Saturday, Nov. 19, to play St. Andrew's Hall in Detroit with The Cramps. At first glance, that may seem like a bizarre bill, but Blackstone said it's very compatible.

"The music fits in fine. That's one thing that I've always (thought). We've never had any problem sitting in with different kinds of bands . . . it's not like we're The Offspring. They have such a defined sound."

*If you have a question or a comment for Christina Fuoco, call her at (313) 953-2047, mailbox No. 2130 on a touch-tone phone.*

### Sound Bites

**Priscilla Ederle**

*Release*

■ "Last Will & Testament" on Trampoline Records of Southfield

After a handful of years with the alternative rock band Cylinderhead, singer Priscilla Ederle has released her first solo acoustic project "Last Will & Testament." Unlike many acoustic performers, the West Bloomfield resident doesn't plan on going it alone for good.

"I don't really want to stay acoustic. I like a lot of electric (instruments). I don't just hear them acoustic. Acoustic music is great but it's also very limiting. You can only do so much with it. I like loud music."

Right now she considers herself "more of a person who doesn't have a band right now," she explained with a little giggle.

Ederle is one of the most underrated vocalists in Detroit. If you extracted the best qualities of ex-10,000 Maniac Natalie Merchant and Throwing Muse Kristin Hersh, you'd have Ederle. Her vocals coupled only with slight percussion and an acoustic guitar show more emotion than any band could.

Lyrically, her songs on "Last Will & Testament" are heart-wrenching. On "Never Please You" she sings "I've been losing sleep being so free. Come and watch me begin. I am doing the best that I can now. See your love in the shadow. I'll never understand you."

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**Movin' on up:** *The Lansing alternapop band the dt's — Marc Nischan, Tom Taylor, Blair Darling and Randy Farlin — while mulling over a few record deals, will play locally twice this month in Ann Arbor.*

# dt's hangs on to Michigan roots

**They honed their skills nightly, playing their original music in bars around East Lansing. Now, the dt's have a publishing/development contract and are on to making demos, doing tours and looking for record contract.**

By Todd Wicks
Special Writer

If it helps, think of the East Lansing music scene as a baseball field with dozens of players, most knowing that once school is over their playing days are, too. But there are others with a dream of making it in the big leagues, who try very hard to catch the scouts' eyes with their talent.

Now take the dt's, slogging it out night after night, playing original music in bars to crowds geared toward Top 40 cover bands. That is, until this year. Now you could say the dt's are headed for the minors.

Last March, the four-man group from East Lansing signed a publishing/development contract with Warner-Chappell Music.

"Basically, it means they pay for demos and tour support," said Tom Taylor, the band's singer/guitarist. "They take care of what you need as a band, but it's not like we've gotten big advances to live off of. We still have to work, but this money is letting the band be seen."

It certainly didn't hurt the dt's — who recently finished a tour of California that included stops at the legendary Whiskey and Roxy clubs— to be picked as semifinalists in Musician magazine's Best Unsigned Band competition in July.

"We honestly don't know how we were entered into that," Taylor said. "I don't know how it all turned out, but whenever you're written up in a major publication, it definitely helps the press kit."

Warner-Chappell is also serving a more important function for the band.

"Beyond the money, they shop us around to labels and try to get us get involved with the right people," he said. "That's the main thing, that connection."

In fact, the band — which also includes bassist Blair Darling, drummer Randy Farlin and guitarist Marc Nischan — already has at least one offer.

"We talked to a few labels and got an offer from an independent label that we can go with," Taylor said. "Right now, we're just waiting to see if something else happens."

When asked if he preferred a major or independent label, Taylor sounded indifferent.

"There are pros and cons to both," he said. "There are a lot of crappy bands on big labels and a lot of crappy bands on small labels, too. A lot of big labels pay for bands because they think you're going to be the next Nirvana or something.

"To me, it depends on if the labels you hook up with is into your music. That really matters."

More recently, the dt's (described by Taylor as "if Husker Du and Crowded House had a baby, it'd be us.") have demoed 11 songs for their forthcoming album.

"We've gone way over budget as far as demos," Taylor said. "(We record) at White Room Studios in Detroit. They like our band, and since they know where our money's coming from, they don't have to worry about getting paid.

"If the indie thing pans out, which it looks like it will in the winter, we'll take the best 10 songs and put those out."

Although slowly working their way to the big time, the dt's have no plans on leaving East Lansing.

"We're staying here," Taylor affirmed. "We've been out to California, seen it, and honestly don't like it too much. We're all Midwestern people at heart, so we'll be around for awhile."

For awhile, it was doubtful that the dt's would be the first generation of East Lansing bands to get a record deal.

"There are a lot of bands that get more press, have more notoriety — The Verve Pipe, Groove Spoon, the Hannibals," cited Taylor. "There's always been bands more popular than us in town. I don't know if we're not as accessible for what . . . but I don't feel bad about being the next big thing. It's better than nothing."

*The dt's play the Blind Pig, 206-208 S. First St., Ann Arbor, on Saturday, Nov. 19, with Whirling Road. Call (313) 996-8555 for more information. The band will return to Ann Arbor on Monday, Nov. 21, to play Rick's, 611 Church St. For more information, call (313) 996-2747.*

# Robb Roy refocuses on making music

By Bob Sadler
Special Writer

Enjoying success in the Detroit music scene in the late '80s was nothing new to a band called Robb Roy. The five-piece rock ensemble had even made some waves in a national talent search in 1989 and piqued the interest of some major record labels.

However, as the '90s dawned, a recording deal did not materialize, and Robb Roy disbanded to work on other projects.

End of story? Hardly.

Robb Roy was to turn Detroit on its ear again. Reformed earlier this year as a tighter four-piece ensemble, the band is releasing an EP this month — something that never happened during their previous incarnation. Collectively, Robb Roy acknowledges that they made some mistakes before, and now they're determined to get down to the business of making music appealing to the masses.

And they plan to do it on their own terms.

"We didn't give it (major success) a chance to happen," said Michael Kudreiko, a Livonia native and the band's guitarist. "Things happened at the wrong time for us. We realized after being apart for a few years that we should get back together."

"A lot behind why we reformed was due to similarities in what people are hearing today with material we were doing years ago," added Graham Strachan, a former Livonia resident and Robb Roy's lead vocalist. "Groups like Toad the Wet Sprocket and the Gin Blossoms . . . We were doing that kind of stuff years ago. We wanted to rediscover our old material and actually record it because we never actually did any recording back then.

"We were making a lot of money, but we were spending it all on shopping to get signed (by a recording label)."

With bassist Kevin Pruett and drummer Perez Morris rounding out the current lineup, Robb Roy spends evenings working at Kudreiko's primitive recording studio in the basement of his Dearborn home. Each member of the group seems to have made a clean break with anything that Robb Roy was in the past. They all are extremely focused on developing their new collective sound, a dynamic brand of straight-ahead rock that refuses to cave in to current trends.

"Our sound has gotten more focused," Kudreiko said. "By recording, we've been able to listen to what we're doing and be more critical about it, and then, decide where the band is headed. We don't try to write songs because we know what's going to sell. We write songs about what affects us."

Susan Leigh

**Celebrating:** *Robb Roy — Perez Morris (from left, Michael Kudreiko, Graham Strachan and Kevin Pruett — will hold a CD release party at Lili's in Hamtramck Friday, Nov. 18.*

**■ 'We'll keep Detroit as our home base, but we are going to try whatever it takes to be noticed.'**

*Kevin Pruett*
*bassist*

Immediate plans center on the release of the EP, entitled "Look Out, Here Comes Bob." The title is a salute to one of Kudreiko's neighbors who dropped in frequently on the group's sessions. An appearance next weekend at Lili's in Hamtramck will serve as a record release party. Robb Roy hopes that EP sales can raise enough money to record and release a full-length CD during 1985. And then, from there . . . who knows?

"We'll keep Detroit as our home base, but we are going to try whatever it takes to be noticed," Pruett said.

"We're talking about a national thing here," Kudreiko added. "But now, we're just concentrating on being a band and having longevity."

*Robb Roy will appear with Broken Toys and Moisture on Friday, Nov. 18, at Lili's, 2930 Jacob, Hamtramck. For more information, call (313) 875-6555.*