

Listen. Enjoy, Repeat

By Jonathan SMITH

It's safe to say that most people, at least to some extent, enjoy music of some kind. These days, with the technology available, it's now easier than ever to acquire almost any kind of music one may desire. There are multiple genres to choose from, complete with sub-genres and cross-overs. Music is everywhere, firmly rooted in many aspects of our culture. However, when we listen, how often do we actually think about what it means to us as individuals?

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One of the great things about the musical art form is that it can be enjoyed on so many levels. There's the simple enjoyment that comes from racing down the highway with loud bass booming from your car speakers. There's the rush that can come from music so loud that it blocks out everything around you. It's been said that a

rock concert isn't a good show unless your ears ring for hours afterwards. There are these simplistic aspects of listening to it, but there are also deeper layers that sometimes people don't think about very often.

What are you talking about? you may ask. It's just music, noise that just happens to sound appealing to individual ears. It's another form of entertainment. But perhaps you don't just feel that way. Perhaps you have felt that there is more to the medium than simply enjoyment and fun. That there is something deeper, something that means much more than it seems to on the surface.

There are those who listen to music, and then there are those who *listen* to music. Some people may enjoy a song for little more than it is, just simple background noise when they're cleaning house or studying. But there are also those for whom listening to music is in itself an activity. They will put an album on and listen to it all the way through in one sitting, captivated by the sound coming from their speakers.

Neither of the two ways of listening to music is better than the other, and just because a person sits down and listens to an album doesn't mean they necessarily

enjoy it any more than another who uses it to accompany their activities.

The thing about music is that it can act as a catalyst in stirring up emotions. This happens a lot, and usually is something that the listener expects and/or even desires. There are few things better at bringing forth memories than a favorite song from the past that is associated with a specific time in your life.

This can be a double-edged sword, as, while these memories can be of good times, they can also dredge up painful or sorrowful feelings long buried, maybe of a particular event or person. It is for this reason that music has been, and most likely will remain, a prominent source of catharsis as well as jubilation.

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There's also the question of whether it is the music itself, the lyrics, or a combination of both that produce the reaction to a particular song. That too seems to be an individual thing. Many

people know of songs where they really enjoy the music, but have no idea of the lyrics. What they hear may actually be quite different from what the words actually are.

Does that not show one of the most fundamental aspects of music? The artist or composer knows what their song means to them, but that means little when it's listened to by someone else. That person could transfer an entirely different meaning to the same song, and in both cases, it has achieved its purpose.

As we proceed through life, it constantly keeps throwing things at us, some good and some bad. We all have things to deal with, and I can say that music has played a large role in many aspects of my life. It has been there through the best times, and it has been there through the worst times. It doesn't discriminate; doesn't expect anything in return. So whatever your genre of choice, be it rock, country, rap, classical, or what have you, don't just listen to it. Enjoy it, and let it be whatever you need it to be.

Thanks to Shawn King for providing both information and his thoughts on this subject.

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UPEI Student Union
Media Release

March 2, 2003

The UPEI Student Union will holding a General Meeting this coming Wednesday, March 5, 2003. The meeting will be held from 12:30pm to 1:30pm in the Courtyard of the W.A. Murphy Student Centre.

The purpose of this meeting is two-fold. First, it is to provide an account to the general membership for the activities carried on by the union over the past few months. In this regard, reports will be delivered by the current executive members; outlining both the accomplishments and challenges they faced during their term. Students are encouraged and provided the opportunity to bring forth any questions or comments they have regarding the Student Union.

Second, this meeting will serve as a opportunity for students to hear from those candidates seeking a position in the 2003/2004 UPEI Student Council. Candidates will be given the opportunity to address those in attendance, as well as the opportunity to field questions. The Student Union general election is to be held the following week. Advance polls will be open on March 10 and 11; and regular polls will be open on March 12 and 13. All students are encouraged to make their vote count.

"This is the best opportunity for students to hold our present council to account, and to hear the platforms of the candidates running in the election," said Paul Murphy, Vice-President Finance of the Student Union, "...it is our hope that a great number of students will come out for anevent that is of considerable concern to all students."

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