

Blatant Blue Rodeo plugging

Lost Together is the first album that Blue Rodeo has recorded that does indeed speak for itself. With three platinum plus albums already under their belts, the group has now decided that the time has come to make a record exactly the way they want to - so they produced it themselves. The result is an album that freely exhibits all of the textures that Blue Rodeo have become known for.

"We were talking to producers about working on this album," says singer/guitarist Jim Cuddy. "But then we started thinking, why are we trying to make someone else understand what we want? The time had come for us to plow ahead."

Working with engineer Peter Doell (who worked with the band on their Casino LP), the group recorded Lost Together during the winter of '92 in Toronto and mixed in Los Angeles. The album's thirteen tracks run the gamut sonically from out and out rockers ("Restless" and "Where Are You Now") to beautiful ballads ("Angels" & "Willin' Fools"). The band's pure pop sensibilities shine through on songs such as "The Big Push" and "Flying", while the addition of pedal guitarist Kim Deschamps (formerly of The Cowboy Junkies) to the group's line-up adds an ethereal dimension to songs such as "Rain Down On Me" and "Last To Know". But, it is the unique harmonies of the group's main songwriters Greg Keelor and Jim Cuddy that most define these diverse styles as the "Blue Rodeo sound".

That sound began to develop years before the formation of Blue Rodeo, when high school friends Jim Cuddy and Greg Keelor began writing songs together and formed an "amphetamine pop band" called the HiFi's. The pair moved to New York City in 1981 and tried landing a recording contract. Three years later they returned home to Toronto without a deal, but discovered a burgeoning club scene where acts such as k.d. lang, The Cowboy Junkies and Jeff Healey were honing their chops. Keelor and Cuddy recruited bassist Bazil Donovan, a friend from their earlier New Wave days and met self-taught jazz pianist Bobby Wiseman through his older brother. A drummer (Cleave Andersen) was found through a classified ad and Blue Rodeo was formed. The new band played wherever a gig would be made available. Soon their live reputation was drawing sell-out crowds. Audiences right across Canada were taken in by this new group's mix of Flying Burrito Brothers-styled country and

Beatle-esque harmonies while maintaining the desperate rock-and-roll crunch of Jim & Greg's HiFi days. The group's free-for-all live performances were another reason for the big draws with guitarist Keelor humorously wobbling across the stage, while keyboardist Wiseman ended many a night standing on the keys of his instrument.

Word soon spread from the street to the record companies and a deal was struck with Warner Music Canada. Their 1987 debut album, Outskirts (produced by Terry Brown) was an immediate critical success, but it wasn't until the release of the album's third single "Try", that radio stations paid much heed to the band. Seemingly overnight, Blue Rodeo was transformed from a hot commodity on the Toronto bar circuit to a national treasure. In the two years following the release of Outskirts (an album which sold over 200,000 copies in Canada), the public voted them Best Group at the Toronto Music awards and the Casby Awards. They were acknowledged as Best Country Group by the Canadian music industry at the Big Country Awards while at the 1989 Juno Awards (Canada's equivalent of the Grammy's), Blue Rodeo was voted Best Group, and "Try" was named Best Single. In its review of the album, Rolling Stone Magazine noted, "The best American band from Canada."

In December of 1988, the band set-up their equipment in an old movie theatre in the east end of Toronto and, using the Comfort Sound Mobile Studio facility, Blue Rodeo turned the theatre into their home for three weeks of recording. The album they recorded with engineer/producer extraordinaire Malcolm Burn was Diamond Mine and it proved that this band meant business and wasn't going to be a one-hit wonder. The album's title track muscled its way onto radio and video outlets all across Canada with a sound that recalled the best of 60s rock and the album quickly surpassed the platinum sales plateau. The group's live reputation continued to grow thanks to a gruelling tour schedule that took them across North America and on to Europe. They played the Montreaux Jazz Festival and appeared on the silver screen as Meryl Streep's backing band in Postcards From The Edge. On the 1990 Juno Awards, broadcast nationally, Blue Rodeo performed in the capacity of back-up band in a Hall of Fame tribute to another Canadian group they are most often compared to - The Band. That show also saw Blue Rodeo being named Best Group for

the second year in a row, an honour they would again repeat in 1991.

For their third LP, Casino, the group took yet another approach to recording - going to Los Angeles to work with producer Pete Anderson (best known for his production work with Dwight Yoakam). Anderson brought focus to the band's songwriting. The songs became more crafted, bearing the hallmarks of classic pop in sound and scope.

The album's first single, "Till I Am Myself Again", sent a message out to Blue Rodeo fans everywhere, that the groups simply refuses to repeat itself. Upon the release of Casino (another platinum album), the group followed the success of the record right across Canada with its first national headlining tour of concert halls. A highlight of the year was Blue Rodeo's return to the Juno Awards broadcast as the featured band in a stunning tribute to Hall of Fame inductees Ian and Sylvia Tyson.

Which brings us to 1992 and Lost Together. Another chapter begins in the extraordinary career of Blue Rodeo. After completing his parts on the album, longtime keyboardist Bobby Wiseman left the band to pursue his career as a producer and artist in his own right. With the addition of Kim Deschamps and powerhouse drummer Glenn Milchem Blue Rodeo hasn't missed a step, becoming an even more awesome live act. Critics have already noted that this new line-up offers a more raw and aggressive sound than ever before.

Blue Rodeo is Greg Keelor (vocal/guitar), Jim Cuddy (vocal/guitar), Brazil Donovan (bass), Kim Deschamps (pedal steel guitar), and Glenn Milchem (drums). They will be performing live at the Barn on Tuesday, January 19th. Tickets are \$10 advance and \$13 at the door and are available at the Barn between 9:00 and 4:00 until the day of the concert.

Speaking of tickets, tickets are now available for The Campus Lifestyle Fashion Show which will be on Thursday Jan. 28th. They are available from members of the junior varsity basketball teams and Trevor Willock. Don't forget about Superbowl Sunday at the Barn on Jan. 28th. One last thing, this week's movies are 'Honey, I Blew Up The Kid' and 'Twin Peaks'. What more can we say for "What's On" than that!