

Features

Bands bring metal trend back to Asheville area



PHOTO BY JASON GRAHAM

Three heavy metal bands performed at the Patton Avenue Pub on Feb. 24. IT, the headlining band got the crowd out of their seats and into the mosh pit

By Lena Burns
Staff Writer

Three heavy metal bands from around North Carolina, Clout, Black Acid Disco and IT, rocked out the Patton Avenue Pub on Feb. 24.

The crowd was a sea of tattooed and pierced local metalheads showing their support for the metal scene.

Clout, from Mooresville, N.C., was the opening band. It consisted of four members who looked as though they were no older than 19.

The vocals and the drums were difficult to hear because the bass and guitar amps were turned up too loud. From what could be heard, the vocals were good, except that the singer could not actually sing in tune. He was more of a melodic talker.

Clout definitely needed a second guitarist. The lead was a weak guitar player and seemed to try too hard to make his sound stand out.

The biggest flaw with Clout was that they changed the tempo of their songs too much and too quickly. There was no kind of melodic transition to warn the listeners that the song would change. It made their songs choppy and disorganized.

Overall, Clout was an okay band, but they need a lot of work. The vocalist needs to work on his

singing, and they need to organize their music so it will flow better.

"Clout had a pretty good stage presence, but they sounded a little too Limp-Bizkit-meets-Godsack," said Melanie Foster, a junior psychology major.

The next band, Black Acid Disco, from Charlotte, N.C., was much heavier and more aggressive than Clout. The band consisted of five members, including a keyboardist who played samples in between songs. The band showed great stage presence during their set by thrashing around while playing and showing the crowd their musical personality.

Black Acid Disco sounded nothing like any other metal band out there. The musical styles of each member blended well together to form smooth, but hard-hitting, songs.

Sometimes the guitar riffs seemed the same in a couple of songs, but the guitarist was strong and held his own quite well. The vocalist sang well. Not only could he sing in tune, but he could also scream and hold out those screams, a plus in heavy-metal-style singing.

The headlining band, IT, straight out of Asheville, showed the crowd what heavy metal was all about. The band is a newcomer to the Asheville heavy metal scene, only having been around since December 1999. However, the members are not new to the scene, except for Shawn Xanders, lead vocals and former punk vocalist.

"Metal's always been truer to my heart more than punk. I enjoy doing metal a lot," said Xanders. They had a huge mosh pit going for most of their set, and gave one of their posters to the person who showed them the most support.

Before IT played, lead guitarist Mike Merchant said, "I'm pretty psyched about the show but I'm a little nervous." Bassist and backing vocalist Roger Maynard only said, "Whooooooo!" This was IT's third performance.

"IT is a mix between grind core, groove metal, death metal and a little hint of Goth," said Shaun Blanton, drummer and backing guitarist for IT. Blanton has been called one of the best drummers in Asheville, but he could use some work.

When IT began their set with "Body Farm," they grabbed the crowd and kicked them square in the teeth. Almost everyone in Patton Avenue Pub jumped out of their seats and hit the mosh pit.

They put on a great show for the crowd. Maynard wore a mask which seemed almost suffocating. Blanton showed off his hand that he cut open on his high hat. Xanders drooled fake blood out of his mouth during "Biomech" and Merchant just smiled at the mosh pit. No matter what they did, the crowd loved it. They even begged IT for an encore.

IT is one of those bands who sound as solid as they do on their soon-to-be-released compact disc, *Psychotic Penetrations*.

"IT kicked butt. They were so awesome. They're a mixture of all different sorts of music, not just radio-play crap," said Foster.

The Asheville heavy metal scene is slowly pushing out the country music and punk rock scene that was once the foundation of music in this town.

"Fads come and go. Heavy metal is here to stay," said Blanton.

Giovanni speaks out

By Melissa Starnes
Staff Writer

Poet and author Nikki Giovanni gave the keynote speech for Black History Month on Feb. 24 in Lipsky Auditorium. Giovanni read some of her poems and talked about such issues as racial reconciliation and domestic violence. "I hope students got some sort of awakening," said Nikki Young, a junior biology major and president of the African-American Student Association (AASA). "She said a lot of things that were real, and I hope a lot of the students were able to take the things she said not as offensive, but as things that will help them interact better with minority students here on campus."

The talk opened with Young thanking the groups that helped organize this event. Then, Niambi Hall-Campbell from Sisters in Spirit and Service introduced Giovanni.

"We thought it would be an awesome opportunity," said Young. "We've never had anybody this big come here. We knew a lot of people would be interested and that a diverse group would be interested since she's so renowned."

Giovanni is a civil rights activist and author of 20 books, including "Racism 101" and "Love Poems." She has also been named Woman of the Year by three different magazines and was inducted into the Ohio Women's Hall of Fame. Currently, Giovanni is a professor at Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University (Virginia Tech).

"I think it was really great to have a black female come and tell it like it is. It just made me really proud and I'm sure it made a lot of students proud," Young said. Giovanni received a standing ovation after her introduction. After the clapping ended, she began to talk about minority issues, specifically at Virginia Tech, where she said only 6% of the students are African-American.

She said she believes that many times black students are asked to learn about white culture, but not the other way around.

"Integration is not a one-way street," Giovanni said.

"I liked the messages she said," said Jenny Ahler, an undecided freshman.

"The majority were positive."

When asked if Giovanni reached both minority and majority students, Young said, "I think she reached everybody, and I would hope that the awakening I was speaking of would be what each student had, that they were exposed to everything from a pretty fair perspective."

The first poem Giovanni read was "Ego Tripping," about a person who talks about his/her achievements and is perfect.

Before reading the next poem, Giovanni shared some of her ideas about love. She said it was good to fall in love, but it does make us crazy. Her suggestion was that someone needed to create a "love machine," which could determine the outcome of a relationship at its beginning. That way, if people fall



PHOTO BY WALTER PYLE

Nikki Giovanni, keynote speaker for Black History Month, spoke on Feb. 24.

in love for three days and then break up, they could just blame the machine and everyone would be happy.

"Sound in Space" was the last poem that she read. Though many people do not believe there is sound in space, Giovanni said she does and believes that it says, "I love you." She commented about all the songs there are about the moon, stars and heavens, like "Blue Moon" and "I Fished on the Moon."

After her speech, Giovanni did a book signing in the Lipsky lobby. The event was sponsored by AASA, along with Underdog Productions, the Office of Multicultural Student Programs, the Humanities Program, and the Cultural and Special Events Committee.

PAID OPPORTUNITY!!!!

Peer Advisors Wanted

UNC Asheville

The Office of Academic Advising & Retention is looking for qualified individuals to join The Bulldog Connection team. The Bulldog Connection is the early registration program for new students and runs over the summer. Individuals need to be full-time students, have been at UNCA for at least one year (sophomore standing or higher) and be in good academic standing with a cumulative GPA of at least 2.5. The individuals would serve as Peer Advisors working with first year students primarily on schedule planning, understanding the general education requirements and academic policies and procedures at UNCA.

We are looking for individuals with a good balance between academics and involvement at UNCA. We want students to be motivated and possess a strong loyalty to UNCA and what it has to offer. We want to select a diverse group of students to represent UNCA and encourage all students meeting the academic criteria to apply.

Students should be able to commit to the four dates listed. However, those who can only commit to two or more should apply and will also be considered. The dates for Summer 2000 are June 16, June 30, July 14 and July 20, 2000. There will also be three training dates during the spring semester to be set when applicants are selected so they can be worked around class schedules. This is a paid opportunity and is not affiliated with the orientation leader selection. Students selected will be paid \$50.00 per session with a potential of \$200.00 if they participate at all four sessions.

Interested students should pick up an application on the door of Lipsky 206 and return it to Debbie Race by March 15, 2000. Once applications have been reviewed, those individuals selected will be called in for an interview.

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Review

The Institute of Outdoor Drama will hold its National Outdoor Drama Auditions in Chapel Hill on March 18. The deadline to apply for the auditions is March 13. For more information, see <http://www.unc.edu/depts/outdoor>.