



The Mighty Mighty Bosstones strutted into the Ritz on Sept. 10 and put on a show that was indicative of their usual high-power intensity.

Bosstones rock Ritz with sounds of ska

Concert-goers needed the drenching rain as they left the sweaty confines of the Ritz Theatre after bowing to their gods, the kings of ska, The Mighty Mighty Bosstones.

These masters of ska grooved into Raleigh on Wednesday, September 10, one of the first stops on their latest tour. The Boston-grown octet has built a humongous following by catering to its fans, and the group's shows reciprocate the admiration and support of their devotees.

ERIN WYNIA
Concert Review
The Mighty Mighty Bosstones
The Ritz Theatre, Raleigh
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Lead singer Dicky Barrett paused in the middle of the band's set to explain how they had been having difficulties since the tour began. "But tonight, things have just clicked.

And we thank you," he told the boisterous crowd.

The Bosstones pride themselves on being a fan-oriented band, and they staged quite a show for their Triangle followers.

Prodded by the "Mighty, mighty, boss-tones" chants of the crowd, the group strutted onstage to the "James Bond" theme song, clad in the characteristic threads of ska: plaid suits and sunglasses.

The wooden flames placed around the stage as backdrops underscored the steamy warehouse, and Barrett soon lost both sunglasses and jacket as the band kicked into overdrive.

The group, which plays at least 300 gigs a year, proved their merit as seasoned, charismatic performers. They played a satisfying mix of old and new songs beginning with "Noise Brigade," off their new album "Let's Face It." The horn section, trombonist Dennis

Brockenborough and saxophonists Kevin Leneer and Tim Burton, wailed as they expertly provided the brass sound which adds texture to the punk base of the band's sound.

The remainder of the group showed excellent technical skills, igniting the music.

By the time they played their more familiar material, such as "Someday I Suppose," "Where'd You Go?" and their new radio material ("The Impression That I Get"), the Bosstones had whipped the crowd into a bouncing, ecstatic frenzy.

Periodically, fans would hop onstage to dance, and Barrett humored them by allowing them to sing along with him before he sent them back to crowd-surf.

After one hour of continuous jamming, both the band and the crowd appeared drained from the energetic show. Still, they returned for an encore per-

formance including "Seven Thirty-Seven/Shoe Glue," concluding a great show for area ska-core worshippers and novices alike.

Perhaps, the constant interaction between the band and the crowd highlighted the entire evening. Such a connection is evidence of why the Bosstones have formed that bond between the audience that is essential for musical success.

Playing in small venues is nothing new for the Bosstones. In fact, over the years they have gained a reputation for packing their high intensity shows into clubs which usually results in a very lively reaction. Tonight was certainly no exception.

Although many of the fans at the show are accustomed to hear the band's songs on the radio, the opportunity to hear the Bosstones in a venue with a small size like the Ritz really brought out the band's true flavor.

Weekend Excursion polishes pop

Once the word about an up-and-coming band gets out, it spreads like wildfire. This being the case, the Greensboro-based band Weekend Excursion has become the talk of the town.

With their new self-titled, self-released CD full of genuine rock tunes, Weekend Excursion is leaving almost everyone who hears them in complete awe. They accomplish all of this without flashy musical displays.

Instead they reach for the essence of pop rock with a musical sound that has been compared to a combination of artists like Hootie and the Blowfish, Dave Matthews Band and Blues Traveler.

The most surprising thing about Weekend Excursion, however, may be their sophisticated sound despite the fact that they have yet to be called up to the big leagues of musical artists.

This is instantly apparent from the album's first track "Realize," on which lead singer Aaron Shepard's polished sounding vocals strike the listener as coming from a seasoned front man of a long established rock group.

The next track, "Getting By," takes the sound yet another level higher as an acoustic guitar opening soon becomes intertwined with Shepard's lamenting vocals. With Michael Ferry's violin intermittently breaking in, the song then gives way to a poignant electric guitar solo that fades out tastefully at the end.

The result of all this is a mature pop rock sound that maintains a fun-loving

attitude without jeopardizing artistic integrity. Unlike many new bands who suffer from incongruance between vocals and instrumentals, Weekend Excursion's vocals and actual music feed off and complement each other.

The song "Nothing to Lose" is certainly evidence of the band's ability to mesh the finest elements of their talent together. Cutting guitar teams up with segments of violin which become layered with Shepard's smooth vocals and results in an absolute treat for the ears.

Another striking element of the album is the consistent quality of tunes that persists throughout. Substandard tunes and songs used just to fill album space are nowhere to be found. Instead, songs like "Nine Days" and "Hard Times" prove the entire CD is an absolute blast to hear.

With so many new rising bands trying to make their way in the music world, it is often difficult to distinguish one from the other. But, with its distinct and shining style, Weekend Excursion is no flash-in-the-pan band and promises to distinguish itself with its catchy tunes and sharp melodies.



With a mature blend of pop and rock, the Greensboro-based Weekend Excursion is attracting a lot of attention. The band frequently plays in the Chapel Hill area and has gained the respect of a number of area music listeners.

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'80S MUSIC

FROM PAGE 5

case in point exists with '80s rock gurus Van Halen. The showboating David Lee Roth singing lead vocals and Eddie Van Halen playfully strumming through guitar riffs on the song "Jump" bring back memories of a time when rock music meant having fun and letting loose.

Gone are the days of huge popularity for hard rockers like Bon Jovi, Poison and Def Leppard. These are the bands who sported parachute pants and whose mere existence caused sudden hairspray

shortages. They have all now been replaced by an assortment of toned-down "MTV Unplugged" albums by the likes of everyone from 10,000 Maniacs to Eric Clapton.

But, the '80s are by no means dead. There are a growing number of people who are pulling those dusty Huey Lewis and the News CDs from the back of their shelves and letting them blast on the stereo.

Sick of the increasing social cynicism in the '90s, quite a few music lovers continue to turn back the clock and listen to all those synth-rich tunes. Local radio

stations have even budgeted special blocks of time for '80s retro weekends and shows.

The Chapel Hill area is also catching the flashback fever which is made evident by the '80s dance that will take place tonight at the Cat's Cradle in Carrboro.

So, when you get a little annoyed from watching the newest episode of "The Real World" or "Road Rules" just take a minute and think back to the time when lively '80s music, and not a group of spitting roommates, was the main topic of interest on MTV.

Perhaps R.E.M. summed up the carefree mindset better than anyone: "It's the end of the world as we know it, and I feel fine." And such was music in the '80s.

'80S FASHION

FROM PAGE 5

they belonged. There are no neon checkerboards, busy pastel florals or primary-colored paint splatters.

Jelly shoes have resurfaced a couple times since their initial decade of glory, but they have never enjoyed the same kind of success as the originals. Recent jellies have all been see-through takes on the plain, buckling Mary Jane which could never hope to rival their open-toed, candy-colored plastic predecessors.

Legwarmers may never make a come-back. Sure, they seem like a great idea — a sweater for cold calves — but they probably would not be the most practical accessories to wear bunched around the ankles of this season's wide-legged pants.

Not everything works the second time around, but everything works in the privacy of your own room. So, maybe those o-rings and zippered jackets could stay in the front of the closet just for those situations that call for dancing around the room to songs from when Madonna was like a virgin and Prince wore purple.

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