

Troika 2008

a photo essay by Jordan Lawrence; design by Jillian Nadell

BY JORDAN LAWRENCE

WE CAN BE EVERYTHING WE WANT TO BE. I walk up to the Carolina Theatre. The cool fall air stings my cheeks. Bright lights accent the well-renovated facade of one of Durham's most historic buildings.

As I walk in one of the double doors, I notice prominent signs forbidding photography of any kind. This, like a few other norms and rules of the venue, would soon be broken.

Entering the vaulted recesses of the already darkened room, I barely take my seat before I pull out my camera and join several others in crawling around the stage and snagging shots of our local heroes.

Triangle music had truly invaded one of the classiest venues in town.

That's the best thing about the Troika Music Festival. It's not just that there's a great show featuring mostly local artists in every room in Durham. It's that the irresistible spirit of area music lovers follows suit.

Every venue felt different than it would on any other given night.

Barely into the set, Kelly Crisp of Raleigh's Rosebuds was inviting audience members to dance along with her music atop the Carolina Theatre's closed-off orchestra pit.

And though the surface showed signs of buckling, I and the others who frolicked up there refused to give up the fight until venue personnel came to get us down.

Broad Street Cafe, which usually has the air of a chic, bohemian hangout, was turned into a packed punk club as, seemingly all of Troika's visitors descended upon the venue for the magnificent final set of the weekend by Durham's Hammer No More. The lingers.

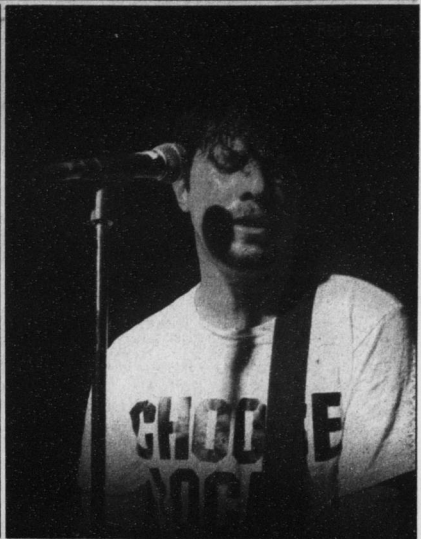
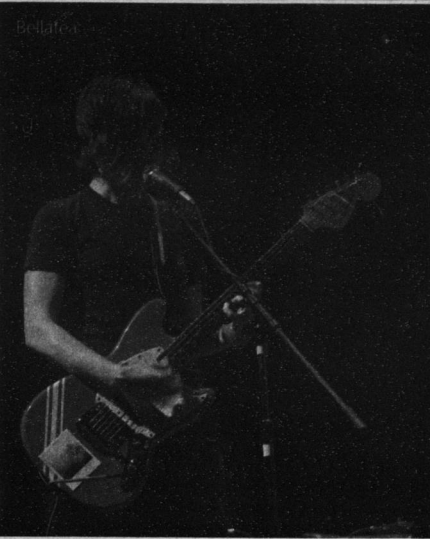
The newly renovated and reopened Duke Coffeehouse, which is often the site for some of the area's most raucous record release parties, was filled with even more energy as Durham's Red Collar amended their anthem, "Used Guitars," to celebrate Barack Obama's presidential election.

Adding lines from Bob Dylan's "The Times They Are A-Changin'" and switching up the ending chant "We can't be everything we wanted to be," by changing it to "We can," the group got the crowd revved up with the spirit of possibility.

In many ways, possibility was what this year's Troika was all about. It's possible to fill out a 62-band festival while using only six bands from outside North Carolina. It's possible to fill every room in Durham with excited local music fans.

And if Troika keeps being as phenomenal as it was this year, then it should be possible for it to become a festival that nonbelievers in Triangle music, both at home and nationally, will be forced to notice.

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