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## 2001's Best and Worst

[http://www.canoe.ca/Jam2001/dec27\\_iannathanson-sun.html](http://www.canoe.ca/Jam2001/dec27_iannathanson-sun.html)

By IAN NATHANSON

Ottawa Sun

In a year that saw Nortel stocks plummet and a \$200,000 "technically beautiful" city slogan greeted with "technically kind" criticism -- not! -- at least the Ottawa music scene remained a thriving beast in the year 2001, right?

### **Technically, it did.**

A dangerous precedent was set last year with venue closures. In 2001, the shutdown of Atomic left aficionados of electronica and dance music in the dark; blues purists watched as T-Rex Smokehouse come and went; and Molly McGuire's turned into Molly's, then Climax, then ... a restaurant?!?

So far, new venues The Bayou Blues & Jazz Club in Ottawa South and Cafe Dekcuf -- the former Whipping Post on Rideau St. -- appear to be in safe hands. For now, anyway.

On the upside, Jim Bryson saw his year-old debut *The Occasionals* released nationally on indie label Square Dog and garner accolades and opening slots with Luther Wright and the Wrongs, Blue Rodeo and a U.K. tour with Dar Williams.

Sue Foley swept the Maple Blues Awards and toured with B.B. King, Jonny Lang, Jennifer Warnes, Buddy Guy, Jimmie Vaughan and just months before he passed away, John Lee Hooker.

And that's barely just scratching the surface ...

In what's become as traditional as swilled-to-the-gills renditions of Auld Lang Syne, the following, then, are the most memorable good, bad and just plain "Huh?" moments of 2001 on the local music front.

### **The Good**

The Recoilers: Not only are they backing local songstress Janice Hall for her first full-lengther, *Collector's Item*, the powerhouse trio of singer/guitarist Jake Bryce, bassist/singer Rolf Klausener and drummer Jon Lomow unfurled moody, indie rock with smart-pop sensibilities with a killer debut EP *For Decoration Only*.

Jacob Two-Two: A fine folk-cum-pop debut release in Well Well and kind words offered to the late Mordecai Richler, the author who gave his blessing for the trio to keep its moniker.

Garrity and Lynn Miles: Canadian imprint True North, home to another Ottawa-born favourite, Bruce Cockburn, welcome into their label home local popsters Garrity, whose sophomore release A Day Away has been gaining regular radio rotation. Singer-songwriter Miles also signs on and unleashes Unravel, produced by longtime friend and Starling frontman Ian LeFeuvre, arguably Miles' finest work to date.

Honourable mentions: Kathy Grant Mahon & Chosen, JW-Jones Blues Band, The Pop Shove Its, GordonGartrell, The Polytones, Eric Eggleston, Robert Ferrell andNineteenseventyeight.

### **The Bad**

Band breakups and shakeups: Danny Michel splits from Starling and moves to Southern Ontario confines to focus on solo career. Starling the trio carries on, recording new album slated for 2002 release ... Sydney's Moon marches to the beat of a new name, After The Troops Leave ... Harrison and Everender go splitsville, Lister goes to Hollywood, and the question remains, has Punchbuggy gone missing in action?

Heatwaves free concert series: Alas, On the Jazz Fringe and AlternaFest are no more, due to funding cuts. The National Gallery nixed the free concerts because of budget constraints and a mandate for more "visual arts."

### **The Just Plain 'Huh?'**

Jason Young: The upbeat bass player for local alt-rockers THERMOclinE suffered a tragic fall from his highrise and left a music community in utter shock.