

# The Perms ride the perfect wave between music, school



## The Perms

Better Days  
Hugtight Records  
www.theperms.com

CARLA KAVINTA  
Arts & Entertainment Writer

Better Days extends beyond the realm of The Perms' power-pop genre. Although "Lies" and "The Comfort Of It All" are reminiscent of '60s feel-good bands, other songs are more fitted to the alt-rock genre, including "While I'm Away."

Lyricaly, The Perms stray from anything dark, heavy or melodramatic. Instead, lyrics reflecting a carefree and optimistic attitude can be heard, only reinforced by a consistent upbeat tempo. Even so, the multi-talented musicians show their serious side in slower songs like "Versus" and "Holding On."

Compared to the likes of Weezer, Elvis Costello and the Beach Boys, The Perms are a testament to an authentic pop sound, exhibiting a variety of influences spanning time and genre. Although their new album, sans horns, reverts back to a more raw sound, it's still sure to impress with pleasure-inducing arrangements and perhaps an even more enlivening sound.

## The Perms

With Red Ram, and Christian Hansen and the Autistics  
16 February at 9pm  
Sidetrack Café

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As many students can attest, juggling school with work can prove to be an arduous task. But imagine a day at work involving countless hours of rehearsals, interviews and touring across the country. Just ask Shane Smith of the Perms and he can offer any aspiring musician advice on achieving a balance between playing music and paying the bills.

Fresh out of nursing school, Smith enjoys life as a psych nurse but admits it was definitely hard to be both a student and a musician. At the end of the day, however, his devotion to music is firmly established.

"I did a lot of papers on the road. A lot of studying on the road. We were out west one time and I remember I had a paper due the next day and we had drinks that night, of course," Smith says. "So I wrote the paper after the show, and I was reading it thinking, 'What the hell is this? What did I write?' I didn't do too well on it but whatever, I got by. That gives you an idea of a lot of the sacrifice you have to make in order to keep your passion alive. Sometimes you gotta do that."

According to Smith, every aspect of The Perms' music is worth the occasional C+ as he describes his dedication to performing and being on the road.

"We're a touring band so that's what we like doing," Smith says. "We like



performing live and being busy."

Come Friday's show, audiences can expect an energized and uplifting performance as reflected in the group's 2005 album, *Better Days*, with only one minor difference: The Perms' horn player of four years recently left the group, altering their sound from a '60s pop vibe to something a little edgier. Despite the change, Smith retains a positive outlook towards their next album.

"It's just kind of a grassroots, in-your-face kind of rock record," Smith explains. "That's where we're at right now and we're actually pretty happy with being a three-piece. It's a pretty

tight unit at this point and we're enjoying ourselves."

Just as the disappearance of a horn section was unintentional, The Perms are clear that this more-rock-than-pop sound is just as involuntary. Instead, the group simply writes the music and lets nature take its course.

"We don't go out trying to write a softer song or a heavier song," Smith says. "It's kind of just something that evolves through the songwriting process. We don't initially go out saying, 'Let's write a heavy song.' It just kind of produces itself naturally."

After many years of sacrificing school, facing rejection and tirelessly

promoting their album, the Winnipeg trio has learned that it's essential to maintain perspective, settling for a more easy-going approach to their music.

"Certainly for starters, we took things a bit too seriously, you know, trying to get that record deal or trying to achieve different successes and if it didn't happen we were a little frustrated," Smith says. "In the past four or five years, we just wanted to have fun. Fun for us means being on the road, fun for us means playing live and writing songs. And if we do get picked up by a label, then so be it. Whatever happens, happens."

## 06/07 ELECTIONS QUESTIONS

### STUDENTS WILL VOTE ON THE FOLLOWING REFERENDA AND PLEBISCITE QUESTIONS ON THE BALLOT IN THE MARCH 7 AND 8 STUDENTS' UNION ELECTION:

#### 1 Do you support the establishment of a **Universal Bus Pass (U-Pass)** subject to the following conditions?

- The U-Pass would provide unlimited usage of Edmonton Transit System, St. Albert Transit, and Strathcona County Transit during the Fall and Winter Terms to undergraduate students enrolled in courses on the University of Alberta campuses located within the Edmonton City Limits.
- The cost of the U-Pass to each student would be mandatory; and would
  - be \$75.00 per Fall or Winter term for the 2007/2008 academic year; and
  - increase annually at a rate less than or equal to the Consumer Price Index for the province of Alberta.
- The U-Pass would be optional for the following:
  - students not enrolled in courses located on a University of Alberta campus within Edmonton for the majority of a term;
  - students unable to make use of ordinary transit services by reason of disability;
  - students who are senior citizens; and
  - students employed by Edmonton Transit System, St. Albert Transit, or Strathcona County Transit.
- The U-Pass would expire upon
  - the outcome of a subsequent referendum thereon; or it
  - being no longer practicable for the Student's Union to adhere to any of (1) through (3).

#### 2 Do you support a beverage agreement between the Students' Union, the University of Alberta and **Coca-Cola Bottling Ltd.** subject to the following conditions?

- Coca-Cola will continue to be the exclusive supplier of cold beverages on campus\*.
- The beverage agreement would
  - provide an average of \$524,377 annually, that would continue to be committed to scholarships, bursaries and student services;
  - be retroactively implemented as of June 1, 2005 and run until May 31, 2015;
  - eliminate the two year period during which the University of Alberta and the Students' Union will not receive an exclusive rights fee.
- The 1998 beverage agreement between the Students' Union, the University of Alberta and Coca-Cola Bottling Ltd. will be retroactively terminated as of May 31, 2005.
- All Students' Union members will be able to view the current beverage agreement.

\* Campus is defined by the current agreement and excludes Augustana Campus



SU ELECTIONS MARCH 7TH & 8TH

If you would like to register as part of the YES or NO campaign for either of these plebiscite questions you must attend the upcoming Candidates Meeting. The Candidates Meeting will be held on Thursday February 15 at 6PM on the 3rd Floor of SUB.

For more information about how to register a plebiscite or referendum side, please email the Chief Returning Officer at cro@su.ualberta.ca