

Reading rocks at the Fort St. John Public Library

STEWART BURNETT
STAFF WRITER



Stewart Burnett Photo

Morgan Peltier, Ryan Bolton and Jessica Lum pose as Charlie's Angels while building their rock-themed display for the "Reading Rocks" Summer Reading Club at the Fort St. John Public Library.

Kids around the city better look for comfy spots and flex their eye muscles because the Summer Reading Club at the Fort St. John Public Library is ready to rock.

Each year, the library runs a summer reading program that includes games, arts, crafts, parties and other fun activities to encourage kids to read over the school break. Students who don't read over the break are shown to drop a whole grade level in reading ability, especially when they are young and still learning the basics.

"Not every family makes time for reading everyday, or it's not part of their routine," said program coordinator Janie Closson. "So with this reading program their reading is encouraged and we give them motivation to do it."

She added that parents and teachers have been impressed by the program's effect in years past, often seeing kids' reading level take off.

"Even just having a small amount of recreational reading over the summer, an hour a day or something like that, will keep it up. And they won't end up having slipped back when they get into the next grade in September," said Morgan Peltier, one of the university students helping to run the "Reading Rocks" program.

their reading and it doesn't matter whether they're reading independently, with a parent, or having a parent read to them.

"We encourage kids to read as much as possible, always with the idea that any reading is great," said Peltier.

For more information on the "Reading Rocks" Summer Reading Club, email fsj.src@gmail.com or call 250-785-3731.

This year's theme is rock 'n' roll. Kids will use stickers to fill out rock tickets as they read more, making for a fun keepsake after the program ends.

Peltier, along with fellow university students Jessica Lum and Ryan Bolton, has been hard at work designing rock-themed posters, displays and activities to make the program unique and exciting for kids.

"What we really try to do at the library and the summer reading club is to make reading fun," she said, "so that's why we have the activities. We always match reading books with fun activities."

She added that kids never seem to need much inspiration to read, as there are so many books out there they already like.

"The Harry Potter craze really kicked kids off and got them into reading. Since then there's been kind of a resurgence of interesting book series for kids. We always have kids coming in here saying 'Oh I've already read these books, I've read Harry Potter and Twilight, what can I read now?' There's all sorts of material out there and stuff for anyone – books about sports, animals, nonfiction, everything."

The program rewards everyone who joins, but there are also prizes for specific accomplishments, such as biggest readers. Kids keep reading logs to track

SUN SHOWBIZ



Tomorrow in your Sun ...

Darryl Sterdan chats with Black Sabbath bassist Geezer Butler about the 40th anniversary of the band's legendary album, Paranoid.

Both sides of Johnny

Romping, stomping R&B singer and the heartstring-plucking, tear-jerking balladeer plays at Jubilee

Johnny Reid is the country Rod Stewart.

Which wouldn't be so confusing if Johnny Reid actually sounded like a country singer. He doesn't. He's a blue-eyed soul shouter with a penchant for old-time rhythm and blues grooves and romantic ballads.

With nothing but a Nashville address, his heart on his sleeve, a good dose of wholesome charm and the ability to really belt out a good R&B tune, he may have gotten away with the crime of the century by passing himself off as a huge country star. And the country music community bought it. Good thing, though. The world can only stand one Rod Stewart.

Johnny Reid has a lot of momentum here. His sold-out show at the Jubilee Auditorium Monday night was the first of four soldout shows in the building this week — he could've done Rexall but he probably doesn't want to give up the intimacy of a theatre coming on the heels of



MIKE ROSS

SOUNDCHECK

Main Event

Johnny Reid

Lowdown

A glitzy Vegas soul revue disguised as a country music concert — or was it the other way around?

Rating

4 out of 5

the band fired up the shuffling groove of *Old Flame* — as in “do you wanna start a fire with an old flame?” Then came *Love Sweet Love* (yes, we're sensing a theme here) as Johnny strode into the audience, and the five-star soul revue was on.

A Woman Like You deviated into a two-stepping feel, dan-

with a real-life anecdote to go with every emotion-drenched song.

All good singers are suckers for the slow songs, and Reid is no exception. *Hands of a Working Man* (another new one) was a touching song about his father holding his new grandchild — declaring there's no place safer in the world than in the “hands of a working man.” As opposed to being in the hands of an unemployable bum. That's just good sense.

The jerking of tears hit a new level with a pair of killer ballads towards the middle of the show — *Doesn't Get Better Than You*, which should've got a standing ovation, and then the new single from the new album, *Today I'm Going to Try and Change the World*, which did get a standing ovation because of the two bagpipers. Yes, in the world of Johnny Reid's R&B act in country clothes (or vice versa), his Scottish heritage is never far away.



... coming on the heels of his quadruple victories at the CCMAs, which follows his new album *A Place Called Love* hitting No. 1 in Canada. Not just on the rinky-dink country charts. It's for all music genres in Canada, baby.

There was no sign of a CCMA celebration hangover for the first batch of 2,600 fans Monday night. Reid, resplendent in white coat and white shoes, was in top form, belting out one vaguely country-flavoured R&B stomper — or tender soul ballad, depending — after another in a glitzy, Vegas-style show heavy on both drama and bombast.

Anyone remember the Honeydrippers? Reid's large band, including horn section, was the country Honeydrippers, the touches of fiddle and other typical instrumentation adding that crucial element of "country" to the event.

It all started with a snippet of *A Place Called Love* before

... into a ... stepping ... gerously close to "real" country, though the ghost of Rod Stewart was a powerful presence with the opening words, "Have I told ..." He could've gone into Rod's *Have I Told You Lately* no problem. But he didn't.

Did this country crowd mind a single bit? They did not. They didn't even complain when Reid promised — or threatened — to play every single track from *A Place Called Love*. He almost did, too.

There are basically two sides to Johnny Reid. There's the romping, stomping R&B singer, demonstrated in such numbers as *Out of the Blue*, which hit glitzy overload as the back-up singers came down for a little dance number, their harmonies bang on the whole time. And then there's the other side, call it the "money" side, the heartstring-plucking, tear-jerking balladeer, ready

Reid handpicked his opening act, a pleasant young married couple called the Stellas. The husband sported an impressive Elvisian pompadour while his wife played the kick-drum (kick box, actually) with her heel.

It could have been wacky, but this was a straight-ahead display of songs from the heart. There was a song about their kids, a song about the recent death of a loved one, a soulful, low-key cover of *Love Hurts*. The duo betrayed some nervousness and inexperience, but with powerful material — free, it must be noted, of country music cliché — and voices to match, the Stellas could be the next big thing in ... well, country music, I guess. Why the hell not? They could go the full-on folk route, but then Johnny Reid would probably have never asked them to tour with him, a huge break for these gifted singers.



DAVID BLOOM/EDMONTON SUN

Johnny Reid delivered at the Jubilee Auditorium on Monday night, the first of four city shows.

Artists find inspiration in surroundings, each other

• CONT. FROM A1

Both Daley and Templeton find inspiration in Asia, but their representations are vastly different.

Templeton does sumi-e paintings, or Japanese ink paintings, which are delicate in their execution, which she said the “philosophy is for there to be a tranquility about them.”

Daley on the other hand, created work that was inspired by trips to India and China, and “in my particular case, they’re anything but tranquil.”

Vincent said working together also helped them with the science of art, such as various techniques behind creating a piece.

“That was important for us, to just keep learning and I think it’s helped us all with our artwork,” she said.

Troutd pointed out two paintings in particular that demonstrates the interpretation of a certain subject. Troutd and Parslow have paintings of the same scene, hay bales in a farmer’s field, that were done on the same day during the same workshop – they’re similar, but different, much like the artists themselves.

“Our unique way of interpretation of anything is really evident... that diversity is a real strength and part of the enjoyment,” said Troutd.

The group also did three collaborations – the first is a series of art “tags” with quotes about creativity as well as the artists’ biographies written on them.

“It’s celebrating the fact that we all have the birthright of creativity, so I think people will feel inspired by reading these, if they take the time,” said Daley.

The other two collaborations include a “window” piece, where each artist filled a space on a six-space frame, and a banner project that currently hangs from the loft in the North Peace Cultural Centre atrium.

There’s no end in sight for this group, as the ladies are planning another group show in Fairview, Alta. next year, and more shows



Barbara J. Daley



Mary Parslow



Judy Templeton



Cindy Vincent



Mary Mottishaw



Sandy Troutd

in Fort St. John and Dawson Creek a year after that.

“We’re going to keep collaborating on things because it’s been a very good experience, very encouraging experience and good things happen when you get together with likeminded people,” said Daley.

Inspiration 6: Celebrating the Creative Spirit is on now at Peace Gallery North until Oct. 17. To learn more about the artists, visit www.artistsnorthcanada.com

Animal Art

Peace Gallery North has a Northern Ambience



ALEISHA HENDRY
Staff Writer

At first glance, some of the artwork currently on exhibition at Peace Gallery North appear to be photographs.

Upon closer inspection, it becomes clear that these "photographs" are actually photo-realistic paintings done by local artist Judi Roberts, and are just one style among many at her two-person show with Denise Linley.

The exhibition, "Northern Ambience," came about after the ladies were introduced by a mutual friend last year.

"She told us we were having a show together," said Linley.

"Whether we wanted to or not," laughed Roberts.

The show features an array of animals found in the North Peace, from wildlife like owls and moose, to more domesticated like horses and dogs.

Linley has been painting for about 30 years and does most of her work in soft pastels. She raises Siberian Huskies and said she uses them for models a lot of the time, which is evident in some of her pieces.

Roberts has also painted for over 30 years and feels she is definitely a wild-



ALEISHA HENDRY PHOTO

Denise Linley and Judi Roberts at the opening of their two-person exhibition, Northern Ambience, one now at Peace Gallery North.

life artist.

"They say you should paint what you know, and I know animals better than people," she said.

The pair spent a year working on their respective artwork for the show, actually having to do double the work as they also have a two-person show together at the Dawson Creek Art Gallery following this show.

Peace Gallery North Visual Arts Co-ordinator Shar Coultrey said shows like Northern Ambience are important not only to local artists, but to the community as a whole.

"It's not like you're coming in to a sort of Mickey Mouse type exhibit, it is first class," she said. "With positive vibes and positive feedback, we're going to win."

Coultrey added that the more workshops that are held and the more visiting artists that come in, the more the art community in the area will grow and evolve in their work.

