

# Personal differences the death of bands

## Creative differences.

That's the reason most often cited for the dissolution of a band.

Occasionally, something a tad more original is offered. Gene Clark left The Byrds due to his fear of flying — and creative differences.

Paul Weller left The Jam because, at 25, he was too old to play punk rock — and he hated the other guys.

Syd Barrett left Pink Floyd because, well, he might not even know he left Pink Floyd. He only knows they don't seem to call him for gigs and recording sessions anymore. Syd, you see, had internal creative differences.

Of course, you've also got yer drugs and alcohol. Glen Buxton of the original Alice Cooper group; Brian Jones of The Rolling Stones; Doug Hopkins of Gin Blossoms; Izzy Stradlin of GNR; Bob Stinson of The Replacements. All are given the boot over substance abuse. All are now dead. (Well, Izzy is still with us ... sort

of.)

But such excuses are the domain of the big time. In the real world, bands split over far more important issues — with finding work and returning to school topping the list. And over the next five days, we'll bid farewell to two bands that have secured a foothold in the local scene over the past couple of years.



Allan  
**WIGNEY**

WIGGING OUT

## No clash

Tonight, jazz/pop/folk five-piece Picklecatz bow out in ultimate style at Babylon. Tuesday, the metallic Miles Between Us hang it up with one last show at Club SAW.

"Unfortunately," Picklecatz keyboard player Steve Meyer says of his band's demise, "we're victims of circumstance. That's one of the

good things about this — it isn't any sort of clash of personalities or anything.

"Troy (Jones, vocalist/guitarist), our guiding light, is getting married in October and his fiancée just got a job back east."

"It's a bittersweet thing," drummer Patrick Calnan adds. "We're happy Troy and Tammy are moving on with their lives, but sad that our band is breaking up. I can be a bit more philosophical than some, in that this has been my seventh band. And from my experience, bands have a shelf life of about two years.

## Punch up

"I've never been in a band like The Commitments where it ends with members punching each other out, but circumstances come into play."

Having kids, for instance. That spelled the end for one of Calnan's former bands. As excuses go, it doesn't have the sex appeal of a drug habit. But it is as effective. And local bands that defy the odds — local veterans Furnaceface or The Hammerheads, for instance — are very much the exception.

"It's not just a symptom of Ottawa," Meyer observes. "It's a symptom of the Canadian music scene in general. Any band that gets together in Canada, it's really a thing of expectation vs. reality.

"When you set out you're maybe expecting great things, but reality sooner or later sets in.

As in, 'Oh geez, I'm gonna play the same clubs in Ottawa over the next X years with this band.'

"You're probably not gonna succeed. So then you say, 'Well, I can either stay and do this or I can try something different and still do what I love.' So a lot of guys end up finding a new band and you try something new for a while to help yourself grow as a musician more than to grow as a band.

"It's a lot of personal development rather than band development that you see in Ottawa."

There will, of course, be a posthumous Picklecatz CD release. The members, meanwhile, are already jamming with other musicians in anticipation of the next stage in their personal development.

Oh, and as for Miles Between Us, frontman Matt LaForge and I played telephone tag for most of this week, without connecting. LaForge, you see, is busy touring the States as part of another band.

That, too, is a valid reason for a local band calling it quits.

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