

'LIVE' FROM PAGE 24
covering the costs of the petition. I also believe a quota would signify a new era in New Zealand music. Let's do it.
Fiona Rae

Hunters and Collectors

Galaxy, May 16
So... this is the Galaxy, smoky, sweltering. Hunters and Collectors' wider accessibility is to a lot of blokes, who surge up the front and start boiling when the band begins to play.

It's turbo music, with loud driving rhythm and tooting horns, big, muscular — ploughs right through this crowd gathering momentum. The stripped back band is different. The music is a lot less complex, and compacted, very dense, the drummer plays a lot of beats. Simple basslines anchor songs which I guess are ballads, melodic reworked blues riffs alternated with howling vocal over fast drumming. They just look like four ordinary guys, instead of massed Marlboro men, against a white strips backdrop with colour drenches making silhouettes. Trumpet, trombone and French horn sounds like the best Australian brass section since the

Laughing Clowns. The mix is so heavy even the song introductions crumble away sodden.

It doesn't matter at all, Mark Seymour's songs express frightening masculine emotion. I used to think passion was a female quality. Hunters and Collectors have always played hairy chested music, panoramic in scale. Personalised lyrics introduce a stick-figure in the landscape screaming everything every grief-stricken dumb man I've known couldn't say.

Most of the songs are about the otherness of men and women, informed by someone with heart trouble. The humour has become very black: "Here comes the free testimony/Here comes the saddest story you ever heard."

It's strenuous stuff, honest and abrasive, articulate, with a surge like a slug of neat spirit or a red rage, and an aftertaste of regret. The new band has broader appeal — emotive rather than intellectual. (I wonder how far this personally cathartic material can carry Hunters and Collectors in the future.)

They play a long set, all of *Human Frailty* and more. It gets hotter, everybody's sweating. The band leaves the stage and Mark

Seymour peels off his soaking shirt, towels his armpits, grabs the fresh T-shirt the roadie laid out and they're back for another four songs. The floor is covered in broken glasses and the people fired up for Friday night. I had a great time.
Jewel Sanyo

Rick Bryant and the Jive Bombers

Cricketer's, Wellington, May
The hair may be greying, the man may have been keeping a low profile for a while, but anyone who thinks Rick Bryant is out for the count is wrong, very wrong. The lights come up (lotsa greens and purples — fashionable!) the band roar into 'I Can't Turn You Loose' and New Zealand's best white male singer puts down his can of beer, grabs the mike and lets fly. From here on in, the heat doesn't stop.

This Wellington venture saw a new Jive Bombers concept, one that saw the members brought in from around the country, supplied with rehearsal tapes and scores; a few days hard rehearsing, two shows. Longtime Bryant collaborator Alastair Dougal holds down the bass role, equally venerable co-

hort Bill Lake shares guitar duties with Wayne Baird while supplying backing vocals as a third of the tuxedoed Godbrothers.

It's the usual large outfit on stage... punchy, clear horns supplemented by (Saturday only) piano. Not, perhaps, the most economical way of doing things, but when this outfit gets going it's a hard, sassy, eminently danceable groove that's laid down — one that most acts around would be pressed to match.

The structure of the set shows the same dedication to effect and quality. The peaks are many, and the pace is varied. At one stage it's just Bryant and Lake on stage, doing country blues numbers that reach back into their Windy City Strugglers' past. By the show's end (and yes, this is definitely A Show), the room is steaming. The singer's given up smoking, and it shows. On this night's evidence only financial constraints limit widescale appreciation of the new, modular Jive Bombers. With soul riding high in the nation's consciousness right now, Rick Bryant may just be right on time.

Wellington's always a good gig for this act (most soulful city in the land, that's why), and those special

moments that transcend the smoke and crowding of the venue were many. Here's hoping the capital, and other cities, get the chance to catch it again. Soon.
Jim Tonic

The Merkins, Undertakers, Batman, Barus, Doubting Thomases, Texas Rangers, Otis Mace and the Psychic Pet Healers

Windsor Castle, June 2
In the darkness of winter young bands are booming. On a cold afternoon seven bands in different stages of development turned out at the other Windsor Castle for Queen's Birthday.

The Merkins and the Undertakers started a bit too early for this drinker's lifespan, though the Undertakers apparently won hearts of those present. Third in line the Batman looked nervous but sounded great. A young seven-piece band with saxophone and keyboards, their songs are short and punchy with lots of energy. 'Keep the Milkman Away' in particular sounded excellent.

Following them were the Texas Rangers, already fairly well known, and the tightest and most profes-

sional of all the bands. They look half punk/half cowboy and sound like it, with a bit of yodelling hillbilly thrown in. They did fine things to some Eddie Cochrane covers, showed off a bit, and enjoyed themselves as much as the audience did. Next on the Barbs mixed originals and covers, 'Barbwire Love' was superb and their originals proved they're not afraid of reggae; a song called 'Abilene' particularly stood out. It would be worth a lot to hear these bands playing together again — soon.

Of the last two bands the Doubting Thomases probably suffered from following three very danceable bands; their guitar-oriented sound misfired tonight but there will be other times.

The Psychic Pet Healers should have foreseen the audience thinning out with the thought of work on Tuesday. Those that stayed enjoyed some subtle good songs, with fine vocals from Otis Mace and Sarah Franks, who really deserved better response.

It was an excellent night, a real tribute to local bands that so many enjoyed themselves — let's not wait a year for the next time.
Ben Jackson

Janet Jackson

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