

FOO FIGHTERS

Kings College Students Bar, London.

The grunge Ringo? It has been said. Dave Grohl's drumming credentials were proven during Nirvana's heyday, but being handy with the sticks does not necessarily bode well for a career in front of the drum kit. However, the Foo Fighters haven't let the forces of cynicism knock 'em down. It's a good thing too. On the strength of a night of power pop of unprecedented calibre, the Foo Fighters show pop's blackest clouds, like the all too tragic end to Nirvana, can have a silver lining.

There is an air of expectation. The Foos' first UK show is in the insalubrious environs of the Kings College Students Bar — a Victoria University Hunters Bar double if ever there was one. The Foos are the first of post-Kurt Seattle's new grunge bands, and with them comes new hope.

Grohl's penchant for catchy, hook-laden pop songs is an unexpected revelation. From the stabbing, Lemonheads/pop-Nirvana splendour of 'This is a Call', the Foo Fighters show they're not just trading on association with the ghost of Seattle's golden age. It's a perfect Summery single — a wild frivolous, free-for-all, full of spine tingling riffs and happy-go-lucky verses. It's an atmosphere of enriching, upbeat, pop freedom. It's defiantly positive, and helps make the evening stand out.

Grohl and band seem determined to have a good time; there's no shoe gazing angst, or maudlin remembrance.

"I'd just like to say that none of these songs are about Kurt," Grohl says. "I wouldn't want to embarrass him like that."

It's a sentiment that, strangely, fits. Nevertheless, there does seem to be more of a story than Grohl seems prepared to tell behind 'I'll Stick Around', with its vicious refrain: 'I don't owe you anything.' But, for the most part, it's as if Nirvana never happened.

This set sparks with songs that are the pure essence of a glorious debut album — sharp, sassy and instantly likeable. Some of the crowd have obviously come to watch and gloat, sure that the Foo Fighters will flail away like a dying snake, bereft of their guiding inspiration. If so, they've wasted their night out. The Foos fit like a glove — bass drums, guitar and Grohl's thin but expressive voice, married wonderfully. The grunge Ringo? No. More like the grunge George, John and Paul, actually.



MTV UNPLUGGED ON SKY

The Sky TV Network has scored exclusive rights to screen MTV America's popular *Unplugged* concerts on the HBO channel. The network will screen 36 concerts between now and the end of the year. The July line up features Nirvana, Rod Stewart, Neil Young, Bjork, and Paul McCartney (Check *RIU Gig Guide* for screening times). Future concerts include REM, Pearl Jam, Aerosmith, Crowded House, Sinead O'Connor, Lenny Kravitz, Soul Asylum, and Arrested Development.



BRUNO LAWRENCE 1941—1995

Leading New Zealand actor and veteran rock musician Bruno Lawrence died of lung cancer on June 10. Although internationally known for his roles in movies such as *Smash Palace*, *Utu*, *Goodbye Pork Pie* and *The Quiet Earth*, Bruno's first love was music, and he played drums in numerous bands in the 60s. In 1971, he formed Blerta, an anarchic co-operative from whence came some hit recordings and key initiatives in the birth of modern New Zealand film-making. A decade later, Bruno was still part of the music scene, in the Crocodiles, but his acting career soon took over. Above all Bruno will be remembered as a generous human being who helped and inspired others. MC



The **Stone Roses** have cancelled their Glastonbury, UK, festival appearance, after guitarist **John Squire** broke his collarbone in San Francisco. The list of who was asked to take their place has been published. The organisers first asked **Blur**, then **Primal Scream**, then **Rod Stewart** and finally **Pulp** said: "Yes!" ... **Courtney Love** has been offered a cameo as a taxi driver on *Roseanne* ... Irish guitarist **Rory Gallagher** (1948-1995) died after complications following a liver transplant ... **the Cure** have a new European summer tour line-up. Robert Smith is joined by Simon Gallup, Perry Barmonte and back on keyboards is former member Roger O'Donnell. The new drummer is soundtrack writer Jason Cooper ... **Alan Wilder** has quit **Depeche Mode**, due to a frustration with not getting adequate credit for his input ... drug busts: **HR of Bad Brains**, caught on the Canadian border with pot ... **Stone Temple Pilots'** singer **Scott Weiland**, busted for cocaine and heroin ... **Kim Deal** of the **Breeders** has pleaded guilty to drug trafficking after receiving a package at her Ohio home. She got a first offender's option of drug rehabilitation. She has been at a clinic in Minnesota since April ... **Freak Power** were deported from Norway and fined 900 pounds for crossing the Swedish border with hash ... **Courtney Love** was hospitalised on June 11, after an overdose of prescription drugs. She was discharged the same day ... **David Bowie** does a cameo as Andy Warhol in a movie about graffiti artist **Jean-Michael Basquiat** ... **Snoop Doggy Dogg's** trial is delayed as he has the same lawyer as OJ Simpson, **Johnny Cochran**, and Johnny is busy with OJ for awhile ... the **Rolling Stones** have recorded an acoustic set for MTV's *Unplugged* series ... the **Bats** are in-studio, producing themselves for an October release album ... **Flavor Flav** is serving 90 days in prison for gun possession ... missing **Manic Street Preacher** dude **Richey Edwards** has been found alive and well in Wales ... support for **Faith No More** in Auckland and Wellington is **Pumpkinhead** ... **Flying In** have their first platinum selling album; **Offspring's** *S*M*A*S*H* ... **Duran Duran** will not have the final word — **Kirsty MacColl** and **Evan Dando** duet on **Lou Reed's** 'Perfect Day' ... the **Exponents** are touring in August.

Sandra Bell

Dunedin singer/songwriter Sandra Bell releases her second solo album this month, on local label IMD. Although Bell has been recording under several guises, and performing live since the very early 80s, she's the first to admit her name is never likely to be seen in lights.

"I accept that my music has got a following that is quite small, and it will always be appreciated by a small group of people. But that's not to say that I wouldn't like more people to hear it, because I would like that, but I don't have a recipe for writing songs that are going to be popular. I just write what I write, and I can't plan it to be in a particular way."

Net, the follow-up to her 1991 Xpressway album *Dreams Of Falling*, is an equally raucous

and reserved affair — veering between harsh, warped rock, and enigmatic, brooding torch songs. Reflecting her first explorations into writing as a poet, many songs on *Net* place emphasis on the lyrics, and often, when they are shrouded in a wash of dark, heavy guitars, she can give the impression of being overwhelmingly down in the dumps.

"I see them more as sad or serious than depressing. I'm an old sop, and I like sad songs and sad movies. But I don't want to make other people feel depressed, so that's why there's a whole wide range of emotions on the album. Music is one of the few places in our culture where you can express your emotions, and I think people do use music for that reason — both the people who make it and the people who listen to it."

BLACKJACK

G U G G A N A U T

new single in stores 10th July

