

live

**LEMONHEADS
FREAK POWER, ZOMBIE BOY
Gluepot, Monday August 5.**

And so to another night of 'Rock'n'Roll', I'm sort of unsure why I'm here, I've never really paid much attention to the Lemonheads to be honest, but a couple of tracks have sort of sunk into my mind and, being the international media professional I am, I was talking to a friend in Boston, Ma. who said "Heck, go check 'em out 'cause they sort of rip live" and all this was enough to make me haul ass to the Gluepot. While here, why not check out the supports? Well, Zombie Boy were there, and although what they're trying to do sort of escapes me, they sound good'n'noisy with some fairly convoluted guitars which can't hurt. They were followed by Freak Power who pretty much sucked last time I saw them, but are usually pretty awesome. Tonight they were in between, some great moments of howling R'n'B fury that at times got lost in a murk of guitars, although 'Rye' sounded alright which made it all worthwhile.

Then on to the superstars, the visiting heroes. They had that cool American guitar group look, very laid back as they ambled onto stage, launching right on in with a vengeance. They didn't seem that interesting at first, just another bunch of serious college boys, moments of R.E.M. mixed in with moments of Husker Du, but then a strange thing happened. I realised I was slowly being drawn into it all, there was a lot more happening than I first noticed. Sure the Lemonheads sounded like the above acts, but they sounded like a whole bunch more as well. There were nice melodic pieces that all of a sudden thrashed out, what I assume were the earlier punkier bits that went down a treat with the mohawks at the front and then some long anguished ballads that made me want to shout 'Grateful Dead'. The Lemonheads slowly but surely hooked me and reeled me right on in, they created a sort of angry, sort of melancholy mood and tossed around some great tunes. To top it all off, they did three encores featuring the obvious covers, Proud Scum, which appealed to the patriotic element, a hotted up version of Suzanne Vega's 'Luka' and a solo sensitive version of the Misfits' 'Skulls'. It was a real cool time, the drummer made stupid faces and looked a lot like Rikki Morris as my friend Howard pointed out, and I left utterly and totally sold on the Lemonheads. It's been a long while since I went to see a band cold and came away wanting to own all their albums, but it happened tonight and it certainly feels good.

KIRK GEE

**MUTTONBIRDS
HALLELUJAH PICASSOS
LEE HARVEY & THE BAGMEN
Dog Club, Thursday, July 11.**

Who the hell is Lee Harvey? Songwriter and vocalist, a fine guitarist. Who the hell are the Bagmen? They're a couple of Picassos providing a rock steady jungle gym for Lee's vocal antics and guitar frolics. The laughing Monkey Man does get serious occasionally, and when he does your skin crawls. Of note were upcoming release 'Security 198', 'Capo' and cover 'Crawfish'. Crowd favourites were singalong 'Spirit World Rising' and 'We're Gonna Be Rich'.

Serious business takes fellow

monitor snout MTJ and I away on serious business. So is missing the Picassos. As they say in this burg... later...

The Muttonbirds are too good. Pristine in fact. Don McGlashan even in the fickle pop context is living treasure. Likewise as storyteller and narrator. There were no mushy love songs per se, just stories loaded with references to our lives here in Auckland. 'Dominion Road' and 'White Valiant'.

Mr McGlashan is sublime. Hell the first time I heard him was playing Mahler's Eighth. One can't help but hear the echoes down the decade of Blam Blam Blam. Rhythmist, Ross Burge has his history in Wellington, jazzwise. Newly resident in Auckland he still finds it exciting. Guitarist David Long looks Sydney type to me. Very cool, very measured. Together they form a musical Rolex, Precision and craftsmanship: ultimately valuable.

BARBIE

**HOODOO GURUS
THE SCISSORMEN
Gluepot, July 23.**

The Hoodoo Gurus? I remember them as a jolly good band — ugly people with dyed hair and voodoo, playing good time garage pop grunge — almost an Aussie version of the Fuzztones — almost. This was of course in the summer of 84/85 when quiffs of silly proportions could still be found and straggly long bob haircuts were considered pretty hip in some quarters — something to peer dismally through whilst listening to Pebbles Vol. 5.

Must still be pretty popular to listen to good time pop grunge 'cos the Gluepot had at least — oooh! — 679 people (I counted them) ready to see their heroes. Uh huh gotta be a good night right? Wrong wrong wrong. For a start the Hoo-doo's (those with hair) were decidedly undyed and looking, well, boring but the punters! Boy were they wild! Bet they've dug up a couple of corpses in their time not to mention pilgrimages to the dusty Australian outback to find bones... nah, just kidding. They would've looked right at home in Brown's Bay rugby club — so would the band.

They reminded me of recent visitors the Buzzcocks covering the Buzzcocks, while lead singer Dave Falkner at least made an effort to get into it and came up with some bewdy lines about the bastard pooshing the mike stand over the rest did their smile at the audience in a friendly sort of way routine. They played competently (or is that complacently?) of course and jiggled a bit but instead of mega blow you to Mars amplification the Hoodoo Gurus would've done better playing some new blow you to Mars songs — sheer earsplitting volume is for unimpressive bands trying to impress.

Their new stuff isn't bad but it may be time to steer away from Gary Glitter rhythms and singalong tunes and introduce more depth, energy, anything. I liked the lack of Americanisms so typical of non-American touring bands and there were some neat cryptic lyrics about South Pacific Islands — hell, occasionally they even sounded just like the real Hoodoo Gurus but too often they were unimaginative, loud chang-ga chang-ga changa-ga guitar noise to bleed your ears to.

The Scissormen also failed to really grab one's attention, some of the songs being a little 'samey' but the dynamics they brought to their songs was impressive, especially for a threepiece and unlike the stale main act played hooky popsongs like they meant it.

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