

Live

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desired response and concert type material.

The songs would perhaps sound better on record, but the best of them were 'Big Guns' and 'When It Rains.' 'Heart and Soul' sounds as good as ever and the new single 'Diamonds On China' gets an airing as well.

In their performance tonight the Narcs are all sincerity and hard work. The audience brings them back for an encore. This time the pressure's off and a great rendition of 'Gimme Some Loving' brings the evening to a fitting close. With a hometown audience the spark would probably have glowed brighter but regardless the Narcs look as if they're here to stay and the new album will decide that.
Jason Kemp

Fetus Productions Windsor, August 30,31

Blame the full moon? The bus strike? A weird mix of people comes to see Fetus Productions at the Windsor on Friday night. This is Fetus Productions *without* the production — not like last time's new-pictures-old-music show ...

Part One, the Fetals, are a shock after the blindingly tame Texas Rangers. Jed Town and rhythm section of Ian Gilroy and Peter Solomon; they sound at times like the master tape of a Scorpions album cut into one-inch lengths, tossed in the air and spliced back together. Sometimes, the aggression is exhilarating, others, the baseness is depressing.

Part Two is the Perfect Product, with Serum replacing Solomon on bass and Simon Alexander assuming responsibility for a drum machine and a terrace of synthesizers. Interest stabs through the noise, but in the end the only



PHOTO BY TIM RAINGER

Jed Town

emphatic thing about it is the punishing volume. When, after 11pm, they begin to take off, it's too late after a long night in a hot, crowded bar ... down the road a little, afterwards, police charge about in small mobs as ordinary people start fights with each other without apparent reason. Blame the full moon? The bus strike? Saturday night, a later arrival, a

waning moon, a *much better performance*. The Fetals more jagged and topsy-turvy at the top end and even more musically at the bottom. Poet types do dancing motions shoulder-to-shoulder with genuine 'leadbangers.' 'Flies' and a hacked-up 'State To Be In' are the highlights. But the Perfect Product are *really* the business tonight ... gradually they build and by the beautiful version of 'What's Going On' they are damn moving, *really moving*. This music has *presence*. This time, rather than trailing on into after-hours time, they close with a perfect note of positivism, Jed standing at the side of the stage, gently singing, "We are alive ... in Paradise ..."

It's sort of unfortunate that a rare Fetus Productions gig is, well, such a *production* — it can be difficult to separate what's actually going on from what's cast onto the group by audience expectations. And perhaps it's a characteristic of Fetus music that it will always be sufficiently close to the edge to straddle both the "right" and "wrong" sides of any line of judgement you care to draw through it. Like it was wonderful that they reached the heights that they did

by the end of the second night and a real shame that they won't play here again this year. The third night would have been a *monster*. Moon or no moon ...
Russell Brown

The Expendables This Boy Rob Windsor, Sept 8.

Freeforming, slamming, jamming, cramming — what's the difference? The difference is clean and spotless. This Boy Rob weren't exciting. Neither were they boring — but endless (seemingly) Doors-inspired cacophonies just aren't my cup of herbal tea. Only for short intervals did they really gel, and that only happened when the riddim section pared down to a simple and repetitive state. The guitar was nowhere in the mix — a pity, because it might have pulled their set into some kind of order. Indulgence will get you nowhere fast. This Boy Rob need less musical exuberance and more self-imposed detergent, to get those notes really sparkling clean.

The Expendables were a total different torment in a stranger kitchen. Sweet pain preached sim-

ply and in some cases beautifully. A mediocre and apathetic audience did nothing to dispel their visual and aural power, no matter whether it was portrayed in the quieter moments such as the opening duet of Jay Clarkson and guitarist or the angst of 'The Flower', to the vicious silliness in a silly song about a spider. The real eye-opener came in the speedy delivery of "In between the gears, grinding deliciously between full on choke and open throttle." Wanna see it again? Yes please!

That wonderful and inexplicable Kiwi enigma was evident in the Expendables performance, something that was sadly lacking in the support band. 'Twas a great shame that the gig-going "punters" were absent — probably they were all over the other side of town seeking slightly more dubious pleasures. The band deserved more than shy applause and a practically empty dancefloor.

Pass the brillo pad and scrape the wax out of your ears people — you don't know what you'll be missing until it's gone. Don't let Flash Gordon drive your tractor either.
Joe 19

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