

# Live

## Flamin' Groovies, Martin Phillipps

Galaxy, August 3  
A good rock concert is in many ways about expectations, and to hell with the reputation the Groovies enjoy in cultdom. I was expecting a concert of good old rock and roll, mixing originals and cover versions, as on their live recordings, and that's exactly what they delivered at the Galaxy.

Alexander on bass and Jordan on guitar are the only original members, 20 years down the track, and the new blood on drums and guitar have added a tougher edge to the music, more akin to the Teenage Head days when the band began, rather than the more pop-oriented period of 'Shake Some Action'. Teenage Head opened the show and lived up to its credentials as an uncompromising rocker; 'I Can't Hide', a

gem from the *Shake Some Action* album, lost nothing in live rendition, while rollicking renditions of old rock and roll numbers 'Slow Down' and 'Tallahassie Lassie' contrasted well with a bracket of new originals, of which 'Step Up' was the best. 'Slow Death', a Groovies' live favourite from their formative years, was a highlight, with new face Jack Johnson matching Roy Loney's original punkish vocal. Not surprisingly the only request from the audience was for 'Shake Some Action', and unfortunately, this was the big disappointment, the absence of keyboards being keenly felt. All in all a fun night of rock and roll hampered by alien equipment and a sparsely populated Galaxy.

The support act featuring Martin Phillipps of the Chills on solo guitar and vocal suffered from the lack of a rhythm section to anchor the sound. Songs that exuded promise generated into harsh treble assaults, all tops and no bottoms, exacerbated by the lack of human numbers in the audience to soak up the sound.

PS: the Flamin' Groovies announced they would be returning

for a full tour in 1987.

## Pterodactyls, Human Lawnmowers, Battling Strings

Windsor, July 26

The weather was 'orrible an' the pub was cold and practically empty, but only the hippest of the hip had remembered to dress warmly and wear gloves — woolly gloves in the Windsor? Yep, it was that cold. C'mon someone, light a fire.

The Battling Strings were the only ones who came close to at least a real spark on the night, and even they weren't hitting no giddy heights. But they're (very) young and potential just dribbles down their legs, across the stage and down onto empty dancefloors. Terrible tuning problems spoiled the songs, but the short set contains mostest things like 'BSG' and 'What I Wanna Do', and if they weren't warming yer cockles just a little, well I dunno ...

The Human Lawnmowers thrive on a bit of intense (as in "Hamilton"

usually) crowd reaction to match their songs, and as one and all lacked spirit in the Windsor, their set consequently meandered. That intensity, along with speed and noise, is their thing at the moment, and when they turn it on, 'Watch Out' and 'I'm Bloody Sure You're on Drugs' will properly blow yer mind.

It wasn't the Pterodactyls' night either, in the end. Martin Kean is the new guitarist (tonight with just one, centrally located ogre-like eyeball) and writer of a small portion of their set. The best things about the Pterodactyls are Ken's voice and something called 'Say it With Oysters' and Jeff Batt's 'Born Again', but where's the commitment and attack that will carry their songs to the audience? The jokes kept things interesting I s'pose, but once the Super-8 movies had finished, most of the small crowd seemed to drift off, taking their long faces somewhere a bit bloody warmer than the Windsor. It was that exciting.

Paul McKessar

## Nicaragua Must Survive

Gluepot, July 29

It was all definitely low-key — at first anyway. I arrived when Sandra Bell was performing. With obvious dedication and a strong voice she read poetry and sang a couple of songs — one about living in the city was good.

Kantuta ("Hello, we're Kantuta, and we're from South America") played their curiously warm and compelling traditional music. They use pipes, guitar, drums and one of those wee guitar-things, and it has a warm allure — warmly received too. There was little said about Nicaragua, except in a practical manner. Kantuta made an appeal for people to join a work brigade going there in January to pick coffee. Any takers?

I can't see any other way of describing David Eggleton, except as contrived. He might (and does) spew out words like last night's baked beans (in Ponsonby), but his patterns and rhythms are too easily recognised as someone else's — and his name begins with John and ends in Clarke. I hope it's just

a phase, I think Eggleton will do something worthwhile and honest someday. His backing band were good though.

Otis Mace and the Psychic Pet Healers started to hot things up somewhat, although didn't spark. However 'Screaming' is a particularly good song, and 'Trains' perfectly acceptable. Uncomplicated fun.

Honest Chris Knox invites us — no, entices us to a new way of thinking and seeing. Truth is in the eye of the perceiver. Or something like that. Change your ways, sisters and brothers, and skip lightly into the land of the new attitude. It certainly makes sense to laugh at yourself when you were 18, put down a sexist remark made by a member of the audience, to sing 'Luck or Loveliness', change guitars amidst calls of "Has anybody got a fuzbox?", and to fall over. Chris Knox is surely a human being, and doesn't pretend.

Lastly, the Able Ogdens, who are really good. Good songs ('Fits Like a Glove'), good singing and yet more human-ness. Yahoo, yeehah, and I used to watch Seattle on the

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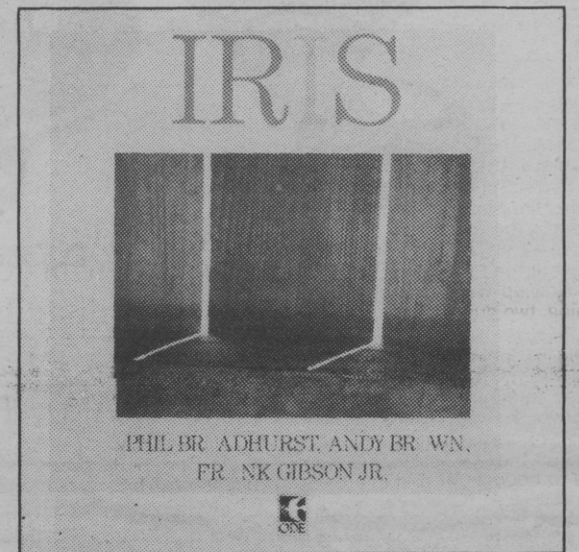
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