

SPIRITUALIZED, LEE SCRATCH PERRY, SPRING HEEL JACK

All over Los Angeles, USA, November 12.

In one of those perverse quirks of fate, two of the most potentially brilliant shows we've had in a long time were scheduled for the same night, at opposite ends of the traffic snarl that is Hollywood at night. Despite the logistic nightmare, and in the name of good music and good music journalism (if such a thing can be said to exist outside Nick Tosches and Robert Palmer), it was decided to attempt both shows.

I was armed with a fist full of tickets, a loaner 1974 Plymouth Fury that had been an undercover narco car in its heyday and was thus fully equipped, and an early start to the Spring Heel Jack/Spiritualized show, due to the Palace's unique habit of

turning out live bands by midnight so a local radio station can hold an under 21 dance party. With my friend Gary, a mover and a shaker in the world of free jazz, and therefore quite cynical about 'rock' music along to keep me in check, we were off.

First stop was the Palace, where a guy I've traded punk rock 45s with, works the valet parking. Once told what we were trying, he was happy to let the parking fee slide and keep the car up front — although as we headed into Spring Heel Jack, I could hear him abusing his co-workers with the car's still operational PA system, which didn't bode well. Spring Heel Jack on the other hand were fine.

I liked their earlier album's jazz/prog take on drum 'n' bass, and I really like the dark feel to *Busy, Curious, Thirsty*, their latest effort. Live, they're not the most visually

gratifying act, but the sound was big, with flurries of beats under the stabs of instrumentation, and a nice seamless flow to it. The indie kids seemed a bit bewildered by it all, but most of the crowd took it well. All too soon it was back into the night and the shit brown Fury for the cross-Hollywood dash.

It's barely a few miles from the Palace to the new Billboard Live club, but that's a few miles of nearly solid traffic. With the aid of law enforcement steering, and V8, we made good time, even managing to smoke the tires on a side street for no reason other than it was fun. Billboard Live really isn't fun though. It's a huge and apparently 'interactive' club, but it had less than no atmosphere and not surprisingly, Scratch was running late. I had my doubts about him live, but he was going to be mixed by the Mad Professor, who's studio band would be backing him. The band finally hit the stage, and after a reassuringly sharp instrumental vamp, the

Upsetter wandered out clutching a toy robot and a handful of incense. He was in fine voice, but he got off to a slow start with a couple of nondescript tunes, and a lacklustre version of 'Crazy Baldheads'. But the band was razor sharp, and Scratch started hitting his stride. The band got a thick, nasty sound going under some incomprehensible religious theory of Perry's, then he busted into a very tough version of 'Curly Locks', and things seemed to be all good. It didn't last though, slipping back down to a very average level, with the Mad Professor barely showing up, although the band were valiantly giving it their all. There were great songs, but they were a bit lost in the slow nondescript rambles, and the low point came with a soul/reggae number that could well have been UB40. Given the depth of the man's catalog, it's a shame he felt like giving us such a directionless mess of tracks. We tried hard, but after a little over an hour that was weighing heavily on us, Scratch launched into 'Papa Was a Rolling Stone', and we hit the road again, for a slow and subdued run back to the Palace for Spiritualized.

The late start at the Billboard Live meant we caught just the tail end of the set, but it set the night back on a positive note. Spiritualized had the mix Lee Perry needed, an overwhelming orchestral monster of a sound, hazy spiralling guitar solos that stayed just the right side of self indulgent, and a mighty intense and exultant stomp through 'Electricity', that served as a caper to it all. Refreshed, we headed home swearing to never try something this foolish ever again.

KIRK GEE

MCs, when the bands aren't on stage the *Hatching* resembles an amateur second-hand car auction. Tonight, the deal is, six bands will play four songs each, and a judging panel of alleged 'industry professionals' decide the winner.

Babinski, non-competitors from Epsom Girls Grammar, knocked out a few tunes prior to the advertised start time, so I missed 'em — but thanks anyway for the song.

The first challengers, a five-piece called *Brutally Frank*, were on a soft, psychedelic rock trip, that had all the appeal of a tribute band saluting Canadian Doors clones, the Tea Party. Their sincerity was questionable due to the antics of an ego-fuelled poseur masquerading as a singer, who seemed barely concerned with what the rest of his bandmates were doing. Mr Frontman did raise a chuckle however, when he wouldn't leave the stage even after the road crew had begun dismantling the band's gear.

Second up to bat was the seven-strong outfit, *Voodoo Moon*. Unfocused and directionless, if the log drumming and congas were removed from the equation, Voodoo Moon would simply be a dodgy, 80s sounding, disco/metal/funk act, indulging in not-stoned-enough jams. To have any impact with their chosen style, VM require a crash course in the essential nature of a strong groove and a strong beat, neither of which were evident.

Her Majestys Minstrels were the top band on offer tonight, simply because they can write a well arranged song, and understand the necessity for a band to play together and in time. With no delay, HMM bashed out a handful of energetic ska/pop tunes. The fresh faced kids congregating in front of the stage looked bemused, but this trio were far and away the champions tonight.

Cambridge four-piece *Pugnaut* are the only non-Auckland band present at the *Hatching* finale. Like Her Majestys Minstrels, Pugnaut have done their homework, and grasped the concept of cohesiveness. Unfortunately it took some brain one and a half songs to understand the vocalist's microphone wasn't coming through the PA. Once all quarters kicked, Pugnaut displayed a nice line in oddball, dynamic pop tunes, built on a simple but solid rhythm, and the singer's raspy Bob Geldof-like voice. As out-of-towners, Pugnaut engender zero crowd response, but they're easily my pick for second place.

The post-Seattle grunge legacy continues in the form of *Sadie 7*. All riffs and no songs, they had a Nirvana/Bush thing going on that sent their big crowd of friends wild. *Sadie 7* reminded me that it was becoming a despairingly long night.

The last entrants for the evening, *Real*, employed two beefy blokes in

dark shades and dark suits, to stand motionless on either side of the drum riser for the duration of their set. They were interesting. Clad in white boiler suits. Real dished up a yawn-inducing melting pot of Chili Pepper funk and Rage Against The Machine metal. While regurgitating Americanisms, they thanked the audience for, "taking New Zealand music seriously."

As the *Hatching* organisers tallied the scores, the 1996 winners, *Pushkin* performed. One judge I know sloped off early, and another remarked, "you have to wonder about the state of the heats bands, by the state of the finalists."

Voodoo Moon came first. *Sadie 7*, second. And third, Her Majestys Minstrels. I'm dumbfounded.

JOHN RUSSELL

THE OBLIVIANS, MAD 3 MOGUIS, Los Angeles, USA, November 1.

The Mad 3 came all the way from Osaka to do their rockin' thing, and it was certainly not a wasted trip. Admittedly, I'm predisposed to Japanese surf/garage punk, and along with Mach Kung Fu and Jackie and the Cecils, I'd rate the Mad 3 as the current peak. But even I wasn't ready for them to be as good as they were.

Dingy club, OK crowd, and the band (clad head to toe in leather no less) just flat out demolished most every rock band I've seen in a while. The closest I can come to pinning it down is an 'MC-5 trying to play Dick Dale' image, but that doesn't do them justice. The Mad 3 were insanely tight and strutted proudly, working just about every rock guitar pose you can imagine into the set without looking stupid. It's no mean feat for a green-haired Japanese guy to play behind the head in the Nugent style and carry it off, more so given he was in the middle of an instrumental surf number that was succumbing to feedback. Pure genius, and the crowd loved every minute of it.

After avoiding the Lazy Cowgirls (they've been playing for over a decade and you've never heard of them, which says a lot about their turgid Ramones-ey cowpunk), it was back for the Oblivians, and in spite of the high ante set by the Mad 3, they delivered. Simple, stripped down garage punk, with two guitars and a minimal drum kit, yet it had enough going for it that it sounded far more interesting than most of their peers. Vocals were traded off between the guitarists, and they had a remarkably gutsy sound for such a streamlined band. They blew through a suitably angry, energetic set, and were promptly yanked offstage at midnight thanks too a noise curfew.

All good fun, and largely due to the Mad 3, I'm a believer in the power of guitar rock again.

KIRK GEE

Rip it up back issues



- Rip It Up Extra 1 (Oct '80) Tim Lincecum, Eric Burdon, KTC, NZ band trees.
- Rip It Up Extra 2 (Dec '80) Kiss, Fog, MA, Newmans, Pinkie Glaze, He's A Mod.
- 29 Sweetest Programme only: Erics Costello, Split Out, Hello Sailor, TIF Dunes, The Swingers.
- 34 Tom Petty, Street Talk.
- 38 KTC, Moses.
- 40 Howard Devo, Staff One.
- 42 Talking Heads, Doors, Bruce Springsteen, Hamman Steve McKinney's Flamigos, Mates.
- 44 Shave Wonder, Adam Ant, Police, Associates.
- 46 Angels, Basil, Desmond Dekker, Stormtroop.
- 48 McKinney's Flamigos, Go-Gos, Smokey.
- 50 Blam Blam Blam, Bill Wyton, Teardrop Explodes.
- 51 Graham Brazier (aka Lyn The Fall, Jini Carri), Duggie & The Dickheads, Hip Singles.
- 52 Smiley Miris, Split Out, Willie Harrison, Reese Feyer.
- 53 Yuzo / Alison Moyet, Joe Cooper, Pop Mechanics, Gantz Jo Jo Zap.
- 54 Jon Mitchell, Tangle Explosions, The Who, Oira Strals.
- 57 Malcolm McLaren, Heaven 17, Joan Armatrading, Sharon O'Neill, Christine Nene.
- 60 Meadow Sound, Place, John Peel, Paul Young, Big Chill, Bryan Adams.
- 62 Billy Idol, Paradise Stephenson, Four Tops, Temptations, Villaluna.
- 63 Eric Costello, Thompson Twins, Paul Morley.
- 64 Harbe, Talking Heads, Adam Carolla, Nones, Guy Trash Set, Axemen, SPK.
- 65 Lou Reed, Do Beethoven, Paul Hewson, Top Tents.
- 67 Neil Young, Giorgio Moroder, Waterboys, David Ruffman, Freddie Slack.
- 68 Hunters & Collectors, Lloyd Cole, Pelicans, Midnight Oil, Dances Experiments, Hazy Lines, Robert Palmer, Sinking Man, This Kind of Punishment.
- 69 Chris, Killing Joke, Dizz Band, Expensive, Jason & Scooters, Last Man Down.
- 70 Waterford Dancing, Toys, Chris Cross, Robert Plant, Double Happiness, Mike Letgrim.
- 71 Bryan Ferry, Dynamic Sohmatics, Men at Work, Bats, Shriekback.
- 76 Beckers, Metal as Nothing, Reggae, John McDermott, Blind Red Roses.
- 78 Nones, Bangles, REM, Jerry Harrison, Christchurch.
- 100 The Turner, NZ Music 1977-1985 (5 stories), Neil Finn, Damien.
- 101 Veraine, Damned, Sam Hunt, Wasp.
- 102 Thompson Twins, Tom Petty, Violent Femmes, CHILL.
- 103 Faegal Sharkey, UKS, Felix Productions.
- 104 Atlantic Soul, Bob Dylan, Steve Ray, Do Beethoven, BPM LP, Johnny, Roy Harper.
- 105 Hunters & Collectors, Nico, Tim Finn, Fleah O-Vice, Kwis in Oz.
- 106 Do Smash, National Anthem, Terry Dallas, Murec Duota, Everything That Flies, Chris Salfari.
- 107 Peking Man, Clamus, Ardiah, Martin Plaza, Pysical Pet Healers, Ruby Turner.
- 108 Pogues, Bats, Flamin' Groovies, Wilco Johnson, Tex Pistol.
- 109 Young Ones' Yyy, Cramps, Healds, Hebe, Felix Tim, Sants.
- 110 Pava Mason Club, Husker Du, Patti LaBelle, Art of Noise, Last Man Down, Alga Brns.
- 112 Genesis, Del Jam, DMU, JPSE.
- 113 Hello Sailor, Sneaky Feelings, Ocean Syndicate, Frankie.
- 114 Beattie Boys, Sly & Robbie, Wayne Gillespie, Dueson City-Rocker.
- 115 ZZ Top, Billy Bragg, Look Blue Go Purple.
- 116 Shriekback, Jay Clarkson, Paul Kelly, Al Hunter.
- 117 Chills, David & David, Adelaide.
- 118 Christie Hyde, Kivi Music, Ebbinuk, Kai's Away.
- 119 Ardiah, Crowded House, 1977-87 retrospective.
- 120 Harb, Housemains, Robert Gray, Trifids.
- 121 Dwight Yokum, Simply Red, Nightshade, A Certain Ratio.
- 122 Suzanne Vega, Los Lobos, Billy Idol, Tex Pistol.
- 123 Shona Loring, Bats, Echo & Bunnymen, Warratats.
- 124 James Brown, Los Lobos, Roy Orbison.
- 127 Warratats, Graham Brazier, Koko Taylor, Neon Pickle, Bryan Ferry, Gave Byers, Rhythm Gals, Dave Dobson.
- 129 Robbie Robertson, Wynlon Marsalis, Faegal Sharkey, Tall Dwarfs.
- 130 Iron Maiden, Judy Mowat, Aztec Camera, Trifids, Hellions.
- 131 Headless Chickens, Sisters of Mercy, Bunka Spaco Proclaimers, Six Volts.
- 132 Jody Watley, Afrika Bambaataa, Veraine, Jimi Mitchell, Smead O'Connell.
- 133 Paul Kelly, Jerry Harrison, Nick Cave, Georgia Satellite, Johnny Devlin.
- 134 Crowded House, Jesus & Mary Chain, Toy Low, Hellhouse Flowers.
- 136 Tex Pistol, Straitjacket Fits, Run DMC, Derek B, Funny Business, Ramm Day, NZ Comics.
- 137 Toni Childs, UB40, Joe Satriani, Snapper, Cassandra's Bars, Bobby McFerrin, Steve Earle.
- 138 REM, Headless Chickens, BB King, Sane, Yearn, Iggy Pop.
- 139 Sneaky Feelings, REM, Acid House, Go Beethoven, John Dux, NZ Film.
- 140 Billy Bragg, Robert Palmer, Upper Fud Pistol, Dal Leggans, Phil Judd, Randy Newman.
- 141 Was Not Was, Jay Reeb, Clean, Miselica, Warner, Juan Carlos, Richard Thompson, Trampoline Zeddy.
- 142 Mica Paris, Diddy Springfield, Yoko, From Lavin Expressway, Dizz Osborne, Ice T, Cowboy Junkies, Terry Gilliam.
- 144 The Gull, Bette Midler, Tim Machine, The The, Young Ones, Ben Elton, Anthrax, Womack & Womack, Neville Brody, Warratats, Trifids.
- 145 Neneh Cherry, Malcolm McLaren, Fine Young Cannibals, Chris Knox, Inner City, Stephen, Easterhouse.
- 146 REM, Peter Dinklage, Batman, Paul Jones, Paul Kelly, Chris Isaak, Sander Shave, Metherworld Dancing Toys, Duggie-chal Uary.
- 147 Cyndi Lauper, Bob Mould, Dinosaur, Jim, Pogues, Bats, Ramones, Sam Hunt, Greg Johnson, Song Publishing for Musicians, Mojo Nixon.
- 148 Tony Loc, Aeromith, Pop Will Eat Itself, Kingstons, Lucinda Williams, Steven Seater, Benjy, Ick, Ick & videotape, Nix Baker.
- 150 Money Club, Hunters & Collectors, Johnny Diesel, Heron & Peking, Music Criticism, Wheeler, Best of 89.
- 151 UB40, Buzzcocks, Whitesnake, NZ Music Club, Duggie 3 (Perfect Garden 20s, Cynthia Street).
- 152 Stone Roses, Joe Satriani, Rough Trade label, Ramones, Michael Monroe.
- 153 Deborah Harry, Duffie Jones, the Fall, Underneath What, Bats, International, Virus, Adava, Kate Cebarino.
- 154 Skid Row, Molly Crue, NZ Metal (Shihad, Fish Park, Anginix), Veraine, Ziggy Marley, JPSE, E-Zee Posse, House of Love, Weir, Sugarcube, Russell of Happiness.
- 155 Chills, Soundgarden, SPUD, Dan Reed, KRS-1, Bob 'n' Bob, Wedding Present.
- 157 Anthrax, Sonic Youth, Steve Earle, Dave Stewart, Strawbs, Hamilton, Clean, Black Crowes, Little Caesar, Angels.
- 158 Living Colour, Cramps, Christie Hyde, Scaptics, David D'Ale, Fast, Jelly Beans, Neil Young, Red Hot Chili Peppers.
- 159 Straitjacket Fits, Norman Cook, John Lee-Hooker, WPA, Jane Siberry, Terminus, Viven.
- 161 Warratats, Replacements, Soho, Soup Draggos, Robert Palmer, Albert King, AK Women drummers, Simon Le Bon.
- 163 PWEI, Icehouse, Midge Marston, Ape Tasmans, Alter 7, Michelle Shocked, Deep Purple.
- 164 Push Push, Bob Marley, Bushwhackers, Queen Ida, Dribbling Darts of Love, Jules Chiuse, Taffels, Don Burrows.
- 165 John Peel, Dinosaur, Jim, Tim Lacey, Throwing Muses, Oira Made & David Egginton, Archie Roach, Bob Geldof.
- 166 MRA, Jesus Jones, Chris Isaak, Jenny Kraviz, Experiments, Chainsaw Masochists, Johnny Marr, Dread Zeppelin.
- 170 Guns N' Roses, SPUD, Alice Cooper, Neville, Brothers, 12 Tribes.
- 171 Flying Nun 10th Anniversary, Headless Chickens, Red Hot Chili Peppers, Bats, Fugazi, Second Child, Andrew Fagan, Gary Clail, Hard-Ons.
- 173 MC Qi & Rhythm Slave, Jimmy Barnes, Angels, Puddle, Rumblefish, Hammebirds, Metelica, Pogues, Debrahn Conway, Yes, Salad Daze, BMF.
- 175 Experiments, Veraine, Snapper, Numbies Out Systems, Mojo Nixon, Rohn Agate, Queen Latifah, SMAK.
- 176 Push Push, Beinda Todd, Psycho Dances, 2Ds, Cure, David Kidour, Devonport Rd.
- 177 Del Leopard, Jenny Morris, Tony Joe White, Touch, Infectious Grooves, Buzzcocks, ZZ Top, Queen Melnie Puss, Rollins, James, 800th Jesus, Hot Pistol.
- 178 Head Like A Hole, Neville & Moana, These Wilding Wars, Black Crowes, Shona Loring, Paul Umana Jones, Sepultura, Iron Maiden.
- 180 Greg Johnson, Ape Tasmans, Margaret Urlich, Extreme, REM, Motown, Cosmic Psychos, Lusa, Clouds.
- 184 Keith Richards, Neneh Cherry, Television, Matchicks, Siobhan Sinus, Huffer & Chinothers, Sugar, David Parker, Crail Seak, Split Ent.
- 185 Neil Young, Bob Jovi, Annie Dummer, Los Lobos, Neneh Sheahan, Scaptics, Verve, D-Faction, Lucinda Williams.

AGENT ORANGE STICKY FILTH HOLLOW GRINDERS @Luna, Auckland, November 9.

Didn't know whether this gig was going to be heaven or hell, or a combination of both. Being a long time fan of Agent Orange's 1979 to 1983 punk-surf period, I feared some gawd awful heavy metal might be dished out by the Orange County SoCal punks, still lead by original guitarist and songwriter, Mike Palm. Thankfully 20 toe tapping, chorus wailing tunes, mostly their own, were doled out in frequent short sharp blasts, from the opening surf punk instrumental 'Pipeline', to the closing anthemic requiem, 'The Last Goodbye'. Unsurprisingly, there was a small crowd for a Sunday gig with little advertising and non-existent hype, but those present were appreciative. With such 'hits' as 'Bloodstains' and 'Everything Turns Grey', as well as a faithful rendition of the WeirDOS' 'Message From the Underworld' reverberating around the brick walls, you didn't have to look past the person next to you for a telling nod or grin. Agent Orange proved an old dog doesn't need a new trick, and indeed could teach the latest crop of Caribbean-flavoured-punk pretenders they shouldn't assume financial success means artistic merit.

In support, Sticky Filth oozed out of New Plymouth and rewarded the faithful with another muscular, world class punk/metal performance. How do you get a bass guitar strap to hang at your ankles like that? From Hamilton, the Hollow Grinders played to a practically empty house and their own surf/guitar sounds were welcome in this town. As Apu would say, "thank you, come again!"

Mac Hodge

HATCHING GRAND FINAL Powerstation, Auckland, November 15.

There was room to swing a hundred cats at the Powerstation this evening — 400 or so rock fans and a smattering of proud parents were in attendance for the grand final of the *Hatching Battle of the Bands*, that has been brewing down the road at @Luna for the previous six months. With sponsor's banners strung up on every wall, a pervading vibe of organised chaos, and two chattering

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