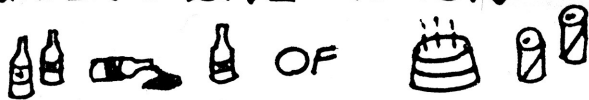


CURFEW'S LIVE REVIEW



YOUR SONG' (MAC'S BIRTHDAY BASH)

Jericho Tavern

It's nigh on impossible to review this evening and manage to convey what it all meant.

This wasn't a gig. This was an event. A celebration. And no, not just of Tavern promoter Mac's birthday but of the whole Oxford music scene. Yeah it sounds contrived and yeah it sounds so damn cliché but there's no getting away from the fact that Oxford has something really special. Something most city's would dearly love to have. Tonight saw nine of Oxford's finest performing a selection of cover versions, the like of which has never been heard before. From the sublime to the ridiculous, from the inspired to the wholly inappropriate and back again. Oh, and did I mention that this was the best night out I've ever had?

Fuu. Yeah, that's what we had tonight and no, I'm not gloating over those of you who couldn't make it - I wish you could have been there to see for yourselves. I wish you could have experienced the atmosphere and the sounds, the drunkenness and the downright, utter hilarity of it all. Nine bands and assorted pop guests and not an ego in sight.

Hence we had one of this fair city's most successful products, THE JENNIFERS, opening the proceedings. Drummer Dan swapped places with singer Gareth to belt out an old Walt Disney classic and, frail and wasted, he looked every inch the tortured post-star. Another reversal of roles and Gareth became Kenny Rogers for three marvellous minutes. See what I mean about inappropriate?

Far closer to their roots were SEVENCHURCH with a grinding funeral march intro that mutated into Teddy Bear's picnic at some juncture. Playing rather more uptempo than is normal for them Sevenchurch pinned us back with the Pistol's 'New York' and Discharge's 'Protest and survive' - one of the slowest bands in the world playing one of the fastest: strange but true.

THE ANYWAYS take us on 'a trip through '80s female groups' with the helpful harmonies of Heavenly's Amelia. Admittedly I didn't recognise the Bangles' 'Going down to Liverpool' 'til the last verse but I did recognise the GoGos and Bananarama and even Holly and the Italians' 'Tell that Girl' - this time warp thing was starting to do my head in and I was desperately trying to remember where exactly in Oxford Memory Lane was.

Back to reality and bang up to date are ARTHUR TURNER'S LOVECHILD. After mercilessly slaughtering that dear old Julie Andrews' singalong 'My favourite things' they bathe in the fuzz ocean of Buffalo Tom's 'Bus Song' and then, bugger me, if it isn't Tavern landlord Bob onstage with them, revealing an extraordinarily powerful country rock voice as he serenaded us with 'Help me make it through the night'. Not a dry eye in the house. 'I want to break free' finishes it off and given the situation we were in anyone could have mistakenly felt they'd been transported to Wembley for dear old Freddy's funeral party.

Things were also starting to get very hazy indeed as the mighty SQUID pop machine piled into 'Make Love like a Man' and Matt's eyeballs did their very best to pop out of his skull. With genuine stadium rock pomposity they attempted to get the crowd singing along but the drunken borders were having none of it. Bah humbug - we're all just too cool aren't we? God knows what happened during the band's attempt at Bryan Adam's 'Everything I do'. Obviously I wasn't the only one feeling the effects of the available refreshments....

SATURN V tried to get all trendy and obscure on us with Supercub's 'Slack Muthafucker' but redeemed themselves more than admirably with their terminator treatment of The Pet Shop Boys. About time someone kicked a bit of life into the old farts. And just who WAS that mystery bassman?

'This is 'Anarchy in the UK' howled DEATH BY CRIMPER'S singer Karen as the band grinded into 'Are Friends Electric?' and this was suddenly the greatest moment in pop's entire history. I start dribbling and grinning uncontrollably at the same time and eventually wet myself. 'Sound of Silence' is given brutally short shrift as are Napalm Death (don't ask me which song, they all sound the same don't they?). We do finally get 'Anarchy' with a bit of helpful duetting from Sevenchurch's Martin Spear.

THE CANDYSKINS' Nick Cope has a pink rubber glove on his head. God knows why but it makes him look like a cross between Foghorn Leghorn and Dennis Hopper in 'Blue Velvet' - ie: totally fuckin' mad. As the band crunch into Hot Chocolate's 'I believe in Miracles' I can't believe how tight they sound. Like they've actually rehearsed it. Bloody Hell! There's is perhaps the set of the night on a night when everybody is brilliant. In a glorious act of anti-sacredness they even manage to make the terminally god-awful 'Lady in Red' sound bloody great.

Almost finally are the DAISIES and even their most cynical critics had to gaze on in awe at their blistering guitar thrash through of top synth-pop hit of yore, 'Don't you want me?' and I want bug each one of them individually. Perhaps strangely they are the only band of the night to cover Arthur Turner's Lovechild - maybe everyone thought everyone else was going to do and so deliberately avoided it. Mac comes on to do the vocals for their rendition of 'Lucy House' before we get to the 'grand finale'...

Ever wanted to see half of Oxford's musical population make even bigger prats of themselves than they normally do? Then you'd need look no further than tonight's massed rendition of 'Mull of Kintyre' - somewhere between the funniest thing you've ever seen and the most embarrassing, at least until it turns into the even more embarrassing 'Wild Thing' and various people end up prostrate on the stage.

No, this sure wasn't yer average gig. This was simply just what you'd like your birthday party to be. And hey, two hundred pissed people and not a single punch-up? What is rock'n'roll coming to?

*** As a footnote to all this: we have the video tapes of the whole thing locked in a secret bank vault. We want £500 off each band or we take them to the music press. Think about it - it could be YOUR future career on the line....

(photos by Dean)



... AND ON A LIGHTER NOTE...

SPOOKY OR WHAT?

A strange but true story from the weird and frightening world of Oxford music this month. Either by a bizarre quirk of fate or because of powers which none of us fully understand all of local Satanic doom-metal band Sevenchurch's last three gigs in Oxford have been marked by violent thunderstorms, the most recent breaking out halfway through their recent set at the Pennyfarthing. Do they have advance access to meteorological reports or are there terrifying demonic forces at work? More to the point have the band been playing any gigs in Florida recently? The decent, Godfearing people of this town must be told the truth!



Sevenchurch: What dark forces are controlling their stage act?

AS FOR THIS CURFEW ARTICLE DRAW YOUR OWN CONCLUSIONS, IS IT FACT OF FICTION?

COULD A MEMBER OF SEVENCHURCH HAVE WRITTEN THIS LETTER!?! ?

KAREN - DEATH BY CRIMPER'S?



Dear Anxious,
Ooh I say, you are a bit scary aren't you? I think your problem is that you are using too much fat in the pastry. Try mixing a little compound W in with the cement and removing the red and green wires from the alternator. After about three months you should begin to see the seeds germinate, at which point transfer them to a window box facing south. Failing that put a paper bag over yer head.

ASK AUNTIE KAREN...

Kind and benevolent Auntie Karen is here to offer helpful advice on a wide range of readers' problems.

Dear Auntie Karen,

I have a successful and satisfying career and sing in a promising local heavy metal band. I should be the happiest man alive but I have one overbearing problem. I am absolutely terrifying to look at. Small children run screaming at the very sight of me, even the rest of my band look a bit edgy in my company and I find it very hard to get any toffs... I mean form a deep and meaningful relationship with a member of the opposite sex since I cannot get through a romantic candlelit dinner without feeling the urge to sacrifice a couple of virgins on the table and shouting stuff about the necromagus and suchlike. Please offer some advice. I enclose a recent portrait photo of myself.

Anxious of Evergreen.



NICK COPE - CANDYSKINS

