



EXILE ON BOB STREET

The Hedge-burner is a tram conductor. At least that's Jim Bob's theory. Think about it. All this free time on his hands. The pent up aggression and frustration. The similarity in size, shape and colour of a hedge to a tram! I mean after a few Crownies and a bit of hedge smoking, one can imagine a row of hedges up the middle of Bourke Street when really those hedges are parked trams. Apparently squatters are living in these trams, which makes you wonder how many live in hedges and have recently taken out hedgehold insurance.

It has been a refreshingly busy week on the Melbourne live band circuit. There were three highlights; Hitmen D.T.K., Paul Kelly and Michelle Shocked.

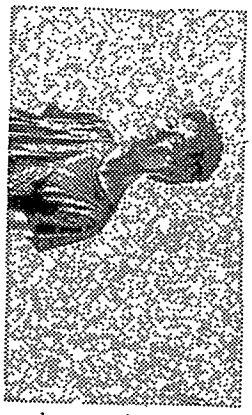
Jim Bob saw the Hitmen twice. At Outlaw they sounded terrible. I can't recollect a worse mix in over two years. I admit the drummer is shit hot, but I wouldn't mind hearing Masuak's lead guitar and Kannis' vocals. This gig was redeemed by Kannis' ever-reliable stage charisma and the awesome selections of encores they played. Seeing the Greek Elvis sing Suspicious Minds on the Chager's dance podiums was a treat.

On Friday at the Price Of Wales the Hitmen supported X and on this night the mix was perfect, but the set disappointing. Briefly, Justice Blind from the U.E.L. Amini LP was a stand out track as was a new number St. Valentine's Day. Again Kannis thrilled the packed crowd with fist-

punching renditions of California Sun, Snake Some Action and Godzilla. The Hitmen are rock and roll soldiers fighting the war against jive. It's rumoured that Kannis goes to the doctor after every show. Let Jim Bob tell you he sent half the audience there with him. And the word is that the band is due to blow the U.S.A away on tour soon.

Jim Bob doesn't want to compromise his reputation for digging long haired rock and roll, but I've got to admit Paul Kelly is close to my favourite Australian musician. As a singer-songwriter he is worldclass and Australia's best. This weekend he played at I.D.'s and anyone who went certainly got their 12 smacker's worth (and let's face it, 12 bucks won't get you the Kentucky Fried, Barrel Or chicken these days).

Jim Bob went on Sunday night and despite it being sold out was pleased to find that there was plenty of room for the drinking arm. I entered the show at 10.30pm and Chris Wilson, the Hendrix of the harp had just started and was booming through The Ballad Of Slim Boy Fat. Some cat. Dror, accompanied Wilson superbly on the electric piano through awesome renditions of Ring Of Fire, Ghost Ships and Stormy Monday. And this stirred more emotion in Jim Bob than Wayne Harnes boundary-line punch in the '79 Grand Final. Debra Conway from Do Re Mi got up



and sung a bit and Jim Bob did enjoy I Put A Spell On You and Paul's own You Can Put Your Shoes Under My Bed. But Debra has got to get rid of two things. Her armpit hair and her sister. Deb's sister looked like she should have been singing the Tarax Black Label Lemonade commercial across some kitsch piano on a P and O Cruise. Not even Debra could redeem her sister with the duet fire. However Debra's duet with Chris Wilson on Making Whoopee was memorable. Mind you Jim Bob can't picture Wilson making whoopee to anything other than a parked semi-trailer.

After a short break Kelly came on and began his 90 minute set. Despite advertising the show as a solo performance Kelly played for the most part with his guitarist Steve Conolly while his percussionist Mike provided backing vocals. At the gig's finest moments Chris Wilson played harp. One of the best features of the show was the unusual choice of tracks. I think just two songs were pulled from So Much Water So Close To Home including the

great She's A Melody, while Kelly snagged about five numbers from Post his best L.P. Covers included Guthrie's Depoters and Reed's Femme Fatale. There was one encore of about three songs duration which concluded with the bouncycyts Only Forty Miles To Saturday. Night with Wilson's backing vocals a highlight. Not even the tall bastard standing in front of me with Ned Kelly's helmet as a head, could dampen a fine night's entertainment. Paul Kelly's brilliance is only surpassed by his modesty.

Jim Bob also caught Michelle Shocked at the Old Greek on Tuesday night. I'm sure that venue once had carpet but after her audience had finished with it was all munched away. I thought Michelle Shocked was excellent and her enthusiasm warmed the benevolent audience. She didn't need the accompaniment she chose for a short part of the set and like Billy Bragg was at her best solo. I appreciate the subtleties of her songwriting and their enviable listenability, but she too should have shaved her armpits.

Went to the market on Saturday morning and got four kilos of potatoes for \$2. Then I went to the cricket in the afternoon where some prick fried half of one potato, put it in a small cup and wanted \$2.35 for it, so I told him to go forth and multiply, only notion those words. Jim Bob 'yeah I eat quiche, but only with Crownies' Young.

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