

# Kinkster socks it to 'em, and then some

Kinky Friedman at the River Club, Observatory  
review by **STEPHEN GARRATT, Tonight Staff**

"I ALWAYS said I wanna be fat, famous, financially fit and a faggot by the time I'm 50," said Richard "Kinky" Friedman (born 1941, Palestine, Texas, United States of America), to an audience of some 250 at The River Club in Observatory last night.

The knee-jerk laughter was not uproarious. Perhaps the "Texas Jewboy" was trading too heavily on his shock value.

Friedman on his early albums, particularly the first two, *Sold America* (1973) and *Kinky Friedman* in 1974, proved a controversial figure, espousing views that were quite radical on the one hand (like conscientious objection) and yet, at the same time, scathingly critical of some of the naive radicalism of the '60s.

But (as is well known by those in media), while shock value may serve to draw attention to the message, there is always the danger it may become mistaken for the message itself.

Certainly not shocked were most of the Mother City audience.

And what did these people get for their money?

On the downside, dismal sound quality. The speakers buzzed and pinged throughout Friedman's sparsely folky, honest-to-goodness-country-boysolo acoustic set.

On the up side, Friedman proved to be an entertaining performer who communicated very well, almost intimately, with his audience. Singing a great deal of material from his early albums, the Kinkster touted a series of his trademark one-liners — nearly all of which are unprintable.

Friedman has a loyal supporter base in Cape Town, as was evidenced by the number of people in the audience who were clearly old enough to remember Kinky from their rapidly receding, collective youth, and many who avidly read his recent stream of mystery novels. To these people Friedman delivered more than they would have hoped for a few years ago.

Iain MacDonald of The Argus Tonight section, who is currently in hospital, is one such fan — and Kinky took the time to dedicate a song to him.