

Live Rabbitt show kills dead duck image

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"DAILY NEWS"

POOR 5000 Volts! Despite crackling electricity, peals of thunder, a stunning (in more ways than one) vocalist in Lynda Kelly, and super-sessionmen as backing musicians, they could not break that spell of special Durban Rabbitt magic that had been cast 15 minutes before, in the first half.

Volts tried hard to throw the plunger of their worldwide hits — "Dr Kiss Kiss," "Walking on a Love Cloud" — but time and time again they were short-circuited by voices from up back shouting for Rabbitt. A display of bad manners, perhaps, but certainly nothing that should have disturbed their panache.

Technically, they were brilliant, with former Hawk drummer Ivor Back holding all together in a polished fan of stickwork, and Miss Kelly (who replaced Tina Charles in 5000 Volts) showing she had just as much vitality and power.

But somehow, hanging up there in among the Victorian scrollwork of the ceiling, the spirit of Rabbitt lurked, ready to plunge and devastate.

And if anyone thought Rabbitt, musically, was a dead duck, last night proved conclusively and without a shadow of a doubt that they are not. In fact, last night marked the debut South African performance with the group of Aiden "Dooley" Mason as Rabbitt's number four man.

It also notched up the

Show: 5000 VOLTS (Lynda Kelly, Steve Lauri, Martin Cohen, Mike Nelson); RABBITT (Duncan Faure, Aiden Mason, Ronnie Robot, Neil Cloud); BRIAN FINCH and KENNY HENSON; and TONY STEWART.
Venue: Durban City Hall.

By OWEN COETZER

birth of Rabbitt, part two.

There have been changes: two sets of keyboards, two lead guitars with Ronnie Robot (bass) dead centre-stage. The arrangement, enabling either Mason or Faure to double or solo on either instrument, is unusual and wise.

The result is a powerhouse of sound not heard from Rabbitt before.

And "Dooley"? Head bobbing, lithe body bending, this SA-born Chinese proved his worth from the first with neat runs and total harmony, sometimes high, sometimes low.

There were some scratchy moments (his rehearsal time with the group since he arrived from Canada last Saturday totalled 14 hours) but these were fractional in the weight of sound and expertise he is able to show.

Faure — beforehand a very much second guitarist to Trevor Rabin — exploded in fast lead work, alternating with Mason, proving he is able to take on the mantle of Rabbitt's leadership with confidence in his ability to wield an

axe. We've never seen him like this before.

Robot, too, was tighter than I have seen him and Neil Cloud among the most hardworking of drummers.

Music, with two exceptions came from their new album with "I Am Aware" the total knockout of the night.

Criticism? Certainly: Rabbitt should now knock off their old music like "Working for the People" It's a by-gone era, man. And concentrate on their new stuff.

Brian Finch and Kenny Henson who opened, have become tighter together, if that is at all possible. Henson's leadwork is still phenomenal as their new song Lonely Spaceman indicates. Finch (ovation) and Henson's electric work well together... but they must have some of their music on record on the show, like Free and Easy perhaps. It identifies.

There were a few sound problems last night. Rabbitt felt them, as did 5000 Volts who were plagued by feedback somewhere along the line, and the notorious City Hall echo made Lynda Kelly (and Duncan Faure) block one ear to ensure their pitch was correct from time to time.

This triple-bill is not to be missed under any circumstances. Oh yes! Only a Sagittarian could tell jokes like comedian-comper Tony Stewart. People actually laughed! And loved him!

RABBITT ROCKS IT TO THEM

MUSIC

By EVELYN
HOLTZHAUSEN

RABBITT attacked Durban teenagers in the City Hall this week with a Rock 'n Roll vengeance rarely seen this side of the equator.

Backed by a slick professional stage crew, they had hundreds of screaming fans in a frenzy minutes after starting. And they never let up until the curtain closed their act before interval.

And that was the only mistake of the entire show.

It was Rabbitt's audience right from the start. They gave token appreciation to compere Tony Stewart and sat patiently through a brilliant performance by Brian Finch and Kenny Henson, undoubtedly South Africa's top folk/rock duo.

Kenny's amazing guitar gives Brian the perfect foil to his powerful voice and hypnotic rhythm guitar.

Screaming

But it was all lost to most of the audience who were obviously keeping everything back for Rabbitt.

The moment Brian and Kenny finished young girls ran screaming to the stage only to be sent back to their seats by two burly security men employed by City Hall.

And then Rabbitt, dressed in white and dwarfed by a huge poster saying "Rock Rabbitt" took the stage.

Their sound is bigger and more solid than ever before, with newcomer Aidan "Dooley" Mason fitting in with the group as though he had always been there.

Powerful and effective lighting, especially during drummer Neil Cloud's solo pushed the show to a professional standard and after 40 minutes they left the stage sweating, smiling and confident that they had "returned" after six months in the hutch.

And they left the audience hoarse and burned out. A pity, because there was nothing left for British disco group 5000 Volts, who were given top billing and ended the show.

Second

Singer Lynda Kelly tried everything but to no avail. It was Rabbitt's audience and 5000 Volts came a poor second.

It had nothing to do with the group who are really very good. They have consistently topped the charts here for months with songs like 'Dr Kiss Kiss, Walking on a Love Cloud, and I'm On Fire.

The mistake made by the promoters was that they should not have been allowed to share a billing with Rabbitt.

Their music is more mature and appeals mainly to an older audience so their sound was lost to many of the people in the City Hall.

But, nevertheless, as a whole the show was fantastic. It started late, but then what rock show in Durban has ever started on time, and it was as good as we have ever seen, — maybe just a little bit better.