

RAVE Dec 16-22, 1992

LIVID

DAVIES PARK

SAT DEC 12

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The morning of the Livid Festival was not particularly kind to me. For one, I'd taken my editor's advice and tried to escape reality at a great Powderfinger/Carlines gig with one too many Vitamin Bs, working on the principle that restraint the following day would be easier. Fortunately this theory went untested.



Pic: Ian Greene

Died Pretty's Ron gets hold of himself

with a power blackout frustrating my search from Toowong to West End for an auto teller. The coins in my pocket would have to suffice.

Upon entering, the psychotic rumblings of **Def FX** were resounding throughout Davies Park. It was one of the day's most frantic performances, with Fiona's frenzied windmill dance action taking some of the more delicate members of the crowd by surprise. As their acid-laced, techno funk powered out of the main tent I wandered out to the smaller stage to be entertained by the indolent pop of Smudge.

Smudge mix beautifully languorous

melodies with that Dinosaur Junior/Lemon-heads guitar sound to produce something very much their own. Their endless gaps in between songs still frustrate me but their Mary Tyler Moore Theme cover more than made up.

Somewhere around this stage I discovered Livid legal tender, a special yellow ticket with mock five dollar note graphics. At three bucks a beer I wondered what was wrong with the old 'admit one' ticket but I know some found it humorous.

Fresh from the Gurus tour, **Died Pretty** were powering in fine form. Once again Peno put in one of those unforgettable performances displaying all his eccentric beauty and more. With the inside of the main tent already a few degrees hotter, Ronnie had his resplendent red shirt around his head in no time revealing a wiry and lightly tanned form. Ronnie's flamed face, flickering lizard tongue and fanciful gestures had the crowd wondering just what he was trying to convey to them. The spiraling Myer's guitar solo at the end of Just Skin was a lot easier to comprehend.

This had to be one of the strongest Livid line-ups ever, but to me the bill is only part of the reason why the Livid experience is so popular. Walking around Livid in the sunshine with half a can of warm VB and bumping into old and familiar faces is about as much fun as anything on stage. Some people damn Brisbane for that kind of familiarity but it's something I find quite endearing.

"Justice can be Blind," sang **Michelle Shocked** and in the year of the indigenous peison Brisbane seemed to agree. From what I garnered Michelle Shocked was one of hits of the day. Her casual, yet cap-

ivating presence was off-set with her raw country rhythms, richly enhanced with fiddle and harmonies. For many, like myself, at the back of the tent the noise of **Calligula** coming from stage 2 was just frustrating. With two of the most diverse performances' sounds clashing, the staging problem was highlighted.

Suddenly I'm diving down a sweltering asphalt plain with an orange glow in the sky and a tattooed Marilyn Monroe mirage screwing up my eyes in the distance, the radio's blaring "Got the time to teach ya, and sure enough baby I'll make it worth it to ya".

The **Cruel Sea**, the ultimate roadkill music. In a night of brilliant performers, Tex Perkins, the Black clad Elvis of Brit Vegas, was right up there. The Cruel Sea play instrumentalists that excite like no other band in this country, their rumbling rhythms and soaring slide melodies creating real atmosphere.

Twilight approached all too quickly. At about this time the **Meanies** played a dynamic set of beer charged power pop on stage 2. The definite highlight of their set was a dismal stage dive attempt that took the fold-back with them. Fortunately the band enjoyed the split of the attempt, if somewhat disappointed at the outcome.

On to the main of event of the bill, **Nick Cave and the Bad Seeds**. Nick is the sort of performer who socks the stage with charisma as he storms from side to side, cigarette gurning and beer in hand. The sinister and brooding Weeping Song and Jack the Ripper were played with a beer charged swagger like something straight out of a German beer garden but it was Decana and Had Dream Joe that the place jiggling with abandon.

All too quickly the night was over. I had held up a lot better than the bodies I was dodging to get out of the place. Ready and waiting for next year.

John Mullen

Well, the day started off in a heap of beer cans, beedle butts and watermelon rind and ended in a stupor at the post Livid staff party at the Port Office.

In between had been twelve or so hours of music, food, metal-clad street performances, sculptured heads screaming out of the earth, drug deals, water pistol fights and a thousand degrees of shared body heat under the big top.

Now twelve hours in the hot sun or under the hotter tent means that a lot of drinking is going to happen and I knew I'd need help. Packer the trusty tape recorder, I gilled the purr for their opinions.



Pic: Ian Greene

Michelle Shocked