

FRONT ROW REVIEWS

HUSH, HOME, HOT CITY BUMP BAND: HORDERN PAVILION

The success of the Easter Festival of Australian Rock is questionable. For most of the shows, attendance was poor — main reasons being that a lot of people thought you had to pay twice — once to get into the show and again for the Hordern concerts. It was an understandable misapprehension and one which I believed to be true until I attended the actual concerts.

Because of the small crowds, it was extremely difficult for the groups to whip up much enthusiasm and, likewise, for the audience to get involved. This was so in almost every case — with the exception of the Hush concerts on the final day of the show.

The support bands on the Hush programme were Graveyard, Melbourne's Hot City Bump and Home. Because of extenuating circumstances, I missed Graveyard, and arrived in time for Hot City Bump Band.

Fronted by Chuck McKlaney and wife, Margaret, Hot City are an exciting soul-orientated band whose act was a little lost on the predominantly young audience. Chuck and Margaret were both in the Melbourne version of "Hair" and, consequently, are strong in both personality and voice projection. They make a strong contrast visually — Margaret, very pale with long, flowing blonde hair and high-pitched voice; Chuck, blacker than black, agile and vocally soulful.

The backup band which includes Mike Holden on drums, David Green on bass, John Adolphus, guitar, David McMasters, piano and Rob Ellis, congas, is light and funky, with a genuine feel for the soul-based repertoire.

To set the mood for their set, the band hit off with the Hot City Theme Song which would undoubtedly drag people to their feet in a club — as, indeed Hot City did during their week-long engagement at Chequers recently.

Hot City have already been asked to take up a residency at Whisky in Sydney's Kings Cross, but commitments down south will prevent them from doing more than one week.

Hot City Bump Band have been signed to the Wizard label and should have a single out soon. The title most likely, is the band's version of The Beatles' hit, "Come Together".

Following Hot City were Home, a fine Sydney band intent on one thing — playing their own style of rock 'n' roll. Glyn Mason, out front on guitar and vocals, has a wealth of talent, but it wasn't until the last number that the band's energy level rose to any great height. If they could maintain that energy throughout their set, by looking more closely at their choice of material, their value as a band for listening would be much greater.

As good as the two support bands were, there was little doubt in the minds of the audience, that they were watching the shorts before the main attraction.

The moment the lights dimmed and spots were thrown on to the four blow-up boardings of Hush, the atmosphere in the Hordern Pavilion was transformed. The audience seemed to multiply as people made their way on to the dance-floor for a better view and close involvement. There was an air of expectancy as the theme from "Enter The Dragon" blasted through the PA and Hush took their positions, backs to the audience. As the theme ended, the band swung around and rocked straight into "Come On, We're Taking Over" — a chant that could become their next single.



• HUSH

From that very first number, audience participation was spontaneous. Vocalist, Keith Lamb, didn't have to ask twice when he wanted people to sing along. Nothing but the driving beat of the band was necessary to get the crowd dancing. It was an extraordinary sight and an even more extraordinary sound.

Let there be no doubt, Hush are stars, not because they look good as the heavies would have it, but because they are complete artists. Their music is an extension of their own artistic natures in much the same way Bowie's music is derived from his own personality.

"Walking" and "Get Rocked" were previewed from Hush's new album, both featuring a strong rock feel which is fast becoming

part of the Hush style. "Get The Feeling" prompted a wild response as did "Maneater", the group's current single.

As usual, there was no shortage of people willing to get up on stage and dance to the group. At one stage, there must have been fifteen, including Frank Kitchener, the man who joined Geordie for "House of the Rising Sun" at an earlier Hordern concert.

However, most beautiful of all was a young boy, no more than eight, wearing baggy shorts and a t-shirt, who later took the stage. Despite being hit by what appeared to be an older brother and told to get down, this young man continued to respond to every movement made by Lamb and

even acted out Les Gock's guitar solos. The enthusiasm of this one little boy was indicative of the fun everyone was having.

Hush were forced to do four encores before the crowd agreed to go home. Time and time again, they demanded one more song, until the promoter made a compromise. "Hush will come out and do another number if you promise to go home." That very afternoon, Hush had been called back for the encores at the Hordern — and there's no hype involved.

By the end of the concert, only one thing was on the audience's mind. When will we see Hush again? The next day wouldn't have been soon enough for many.

By Mitch

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