

Martin Martini & The Bonepalace

Orchestra @ The Corner Hotel, Melbourne

Reviews by 10stwhispers, 2nd August, 2008



Wagons, their name derived from their frontman's last name, played with genuine vigour. Between each song Henry Wagons addressed the crowd telling us about his travels around Australia and how each song came about. Towards the end of their set, two punters decided to start a chess game on the floor in front of the band. Seeing this, Henry Wagons called out cheerily to the crowd to come up front and bash the two up. The crowd was actively supportive of the band as well, with some boogie-ing out on the floor. Their set ended with a heartening round of applause.

Martin Martini & The Bonepalace Orchestra started off with a video about a Viking (or well, he looked like a Viking) on a boat with a whole load of monkeys and a couple of dead bodies. The band finally got on stage, with glowsticks in their beer glasses. The orchestra consisted of James Macaulay on the trombone, Sam Dunscombe on the clarinet, Natasha Rose on the guitar, Jules Pascoe on the bass and Arron Light on the drums. The quirkiness of the band struck me as soon as the lights came on and they started playing. James was half-naked in a skirt, while Sam was in rather formal wear. He actually reminded me a little bit of Harry Potter, to tell the truth. Martin Martini's voice bellowed through The Corner Hotel with such strength and richness that it was hard not to like him at first listen. The way he stomped his foot in time to the music and shook his arms in a funny dance, it was hard not to laugh.

In the second song, We're All Just Monkeys, three kids dressed in furry monkey suits bounded up on stage. There were astonished gasps and cheers from the crowd as the little ones did their thing on stage. They shook their bottoms, made faces, scratched under their armpits, and basically did everything monkeys do. Each one had their own little solo dance as well, which were adorable in their own way. One played the tough monkey, making fierce faces and acting more like a lion than a monkey, but cute nonetheless!

One of the stories that Martin Martini shared through their set was of Natasha Rose puking on her 70s vintage dress in the afternoon because she was

nervous before her gig. The poor girl stood there, smiling embarrassedly, but it was all in good fun. Another was of a guy at the Richmond train station who was bashing up the vending machine. Apparently, not much of the vending machine's left. His funny stories had the crowd tickled.

Martin Martini pulled his uncle Peter up on stage as well to get him to introduce their song I Caught Jesus Sleeping In in Greek. He cracked a couple of jokes about how his uncle would grab his private parts when he was a wee lad, insisting that it wasn't with any dirty intentions, just... to grab it. His uncle was a good sport too, delivering his short speech in Greek, then jumping off stage and joining the dancing crowd.

There were waltzes, where Martin Martini encouraged the crowd to pick a partner and dance, and there were wicked trombone and clarinet solos. It was hard not to feel caught up in the atmosphere; very hard not to bop along to the funky rhythms; and nearly impossible to leave The Corner Hotel with a smile on your face.