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MUSIC NEWS

A fine turn... out

February 16, 2010

By Neil Comfort

I had another one of those immensely satisfying live music experiences which remind me how lucky I am to write this column - attending the performances of Niba van der Spuy and Paryl Purkiss at St Clements in Durban's Musgrave Road on Thursday.

The satisfaction was induced as much by the fine performances delivered as by the capacity audience. It is often so easy to become disheartened with the South African music industry, particularly its live component, to which I have devoted my life.

Fickle audiences, lack of corporate buy-in in the form of sponsorship - even a fraction of what is spent on sport would make a difference - and a general lack of understanding and support from local, provincial and national government structures make it a very difficult industry in which to work. To the point that one often questions whether there is an industry at all.

Excluding CD sales, I would conservatively estimate that in excess of R12 000 was generated through tickets, food and beverage sales. The musicians earned their slice of the pie and the owner and staff of the garden café boosted their monthly income, solely due to this concert being staged.

And industrious week ahead ...

Tonight, the Hal'Man and Anton Cavthorn-Blazeby perform at Highfield House in Hillary from 7.30pm. The braais will be lit at 6pm if you wish to eat first, and entrance is R30. Further info is on 082 787 5388.

Tomorrow evening the Centre for Jazz and Popular Music at Durban's UKZN presents a fundraising concert for Niba. There's a stellar line-up of musicians on show and I have no doubt the venue will be packed. Ernie Smith, Natalie Rungan, Sazi Oamini, Philani Ngidi, Karim Davies, Susan Barry, Neil Gonzales, Demi Fernandez, Mageshen Naidoo, Debbi Mari, Prince Sulo, George Mari, Milton Chissano, Bruce Baker - all for R20! It starts at 5.30pm and more info is on 031 260 3285.

Rob Warren and The Royal perform on the Upper Deck at Durban's uShaka Marine World on Thursday, from 7pm. Warren has a long and accomplished career, both as a solo singer-songwriter and as frontman for previous projects such as 33.

The opening set will feature another of his projects, known as Zeffa, a proudly South African tribute band covering hits from bands such as Mango Groove, Johnny Clegg, The Parlotones and Springbok Nude Girls.

The second set will feature the original material of The Royal, a five-piece outfit also featuring Garth Warren on bass guitar, Steve Murray on guitar, Andrew Makina on drums and Melissa Chaplin on keyboards. Entrance is free, but booking a table at the restaurant is advised.

Also on Thursday, Guy Buttery kicks off a seven-gig tour of his former home province with a performance at Maitzberg College at 7.30pm. Entrance is R60 (R30 scholars and senior citizens), with bookings on 033 342 9376.

On Friday, he will be performing at Durban's Alliance Francaise, from 7.30pm. Entrance is R50 and bookings are on 031 312 9582.

On Saturday, you can catch him at The Graham Hotel, Eshowe, from 7.30pm. R50 (R30 students) gets you in, with bookings on 082 821 8113.



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