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Injured Ninja@ Artrage Bakery, Perth (25/02/11)

Local News by iamthemonkeyhead, 27th February, 2011



In a night with as many acts as this, it would be irresponsible to say it was all about the headliners. Even though most of the crowd was itching to see **Injured Ninja** and The Artrage Bakery never quite filled up, the support acts held their own, transcending a simple LP launch and making this a night about Australia's incredible musical talent.

It was peculiar to have the night opening with smooth hip hop like Nas from the DJ, but perhaps it's only natural to mix beats rather than guitar riffs in between sets. **Digger Rokwell** provided the interlude between all the bands and, although he had some great music, it was ambitious to try to mix so many styles. There was hip hop, jazz, dubstep and reggae, to name a few genres in his repertoire, yet with all this variety, some of his mixes found their way into the speakers prematurely, making for a jarring and uncomfortable listen as he wrestled the tracks back into synchronisation and volumetric parity.

The first live act of the night was an amalgamation of everything that was beautiful in 90s alt-rock, a love letter to the grunge of the past, providing a good primer for the headliners of the night. The bleak landscapes painted by **Mile End**'s echoing guitars were brought to life by the tortured falsettos of lead **Dean Anthonisz**' delicate vocals, keeping the audience in raptures while making them question their existence as he sang lazily into the microphone. For those without prior knowledge of the ten-year-old band it would be easy to confuse them with a Radiohead in their prime. Yet they brought enough modernity and progression to their music that they represented the evolution of a genre that the world has sadly forgotten.

A man convulsing with ecstasy as his endless electronic crescendos hypnotised the crowd, **Axxonn** had taken over the stage and made it his own. Almost unaware of his audience, the boy from Brisbane's dissonance and glitchy noise blended perfectly with the disco pop flavours he fed the audience, repeating over and over to give them a natural high. He brought with him memories of sci-fi, from the polluted dystopia of *Blade Runner* to the hopeless beauty of *Sunlight*, his sound was one of eternity.

Next on the bill, **Naik** followed the electronic theme with a mixture of dope beats and global music samples, indulging listeners in the sounds of locales from Latin America to India. With Naik himself on the synthesisers and **Astep** on the drums the duo made a beautifully rich sound that took influences from dubstep, breakbeats and traditional music. Arabic singing was sampled with oriental instrumentation and complimented with psychedelic visuals on-screen. From the surreal to the progressive, the band pushed hip hop into a new echelon of musical intelligence with an experience that sounded heavy but managed to remain mellow. Sadly, there was trouble halfway in where Naik forgot one of his own tracks and had to cut it short to play one he could remember – a disappointing moment but one that did not diminish the admiration of the music on show.

The headliners drew everyone in when they began, their noise and anger inspiring fans into the kind of convulsions typical of zombie films. Energetically, Injured Ninja filled the venue with the constant blare of shredding guitars and thrumming basslines, punctuated with **Steven Hughes**' screams and **Jake Steele**'s walls of electronic noise. **Matt Bairstow** kept the experience intelligent and complex with his fluctuating drum patterns taking leads from salsa, punk



About The Author



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iamthemonkeyhead joined us on the 26th Apr, 2009 and is a contributor.

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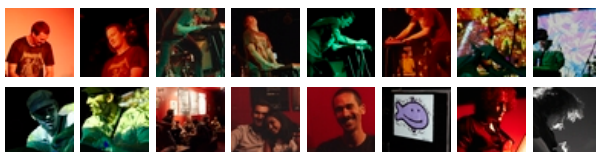
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and complex with his fluctuating drum patterns taking leads from salsa, punk, metal and reggae to name a few within his capacity while **Dominic Pearce** maintained the visual presence of their show, jumping around and keeping the excitement going throughout.

Their music did not break perceptions of the genre, rather it pushed the genre forward with intelligent composition and polished execution. By the end, the four were saturated from the heat of the venue, having worked hard to deliver a show worthy of an album launch; swaying those on the fence to buy *Injured Ninja vs. Skylazer* – with tracks like *Fallopian Tube Screamer* how could you resist?

Tomás Ford had the misfortune of playing last to a room with a maximum of 30 people. He was consistently quirky and funny, with a camp style that resembled drag and cabaret theatre. He jumped into the audience and danced with crowd members, sexually assaulting and attempting to seduce them – his show was determined to shock and awe – while his songs pulsed with electronica and 8-bit beats. He used the electronic sounds of space with driving arpeggios and hard basslines to keep the listeners engaged, but by this point in the night the fans were all too tired to keep dancing. His act was not given the attention it was due but he left an impression that will stay with viewers for some time to come.

For a band with such a unique style, Injured Ninja's album launch enjoyed a lot of success and although they were the main act in the line-up, it was clear to all that any one of those bands had the talent to be the headlining act on any other night.



Injured Ninja
February 25th, 2011

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This was such a good gig!



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Cut I missed it! Was planning to go but too many bevys at our arvo show led me astray :-(



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fantastic night!



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i heard everyone loved the guy reviewing it more than they liked the bands. they chanted for him to go on stage and read some of his secret notes but he was too modest to give in to the pressure.



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