

Dresden Dolls October 25 at the Mod Club



"It's my first show on pseudoephedrine," says Amanda Palmer after playing "Missed Me" with the psychotic smile and the angry passion of a woman scorned. The Dresden Doll's singer/pianist is sick. But there is no way anyone could tell if she wasn't unintentionally rubbing white face paint off her nose by blowing it so hard, after schizophrenically banging out tunes with drummer Brian Viglione.

The show at the Mod Club has all the Weimar-era cabaret fixtures that fans expect from the Boston duo. During "Coin Operated Boy," a male mime walks on stage and stands behind Palmer. Looking back to him, she changes the lyrics and coyly sings, "I can even fuck him in the ass." It is this kind of extravagance and sense of humour that encourages the crowd to be just as playfully crude to the band.

"Driink!" demands an intoxicated fan standing near the front of the stage. It is the same slurring punter who has incessantly interrupted the Dresden Dolls' banter during breaks. Palmer, who had politely rejected the request most of the night, finally succumbs to the pressure. She grabs her beer bottle and starts to chug. As beer trickles down her mouth and neck while she drinks with impressive speed, the audience cheers.

It's just like being at a punk cabaret frat party.

The Go! Team October 30 at the Phoenix

The Go! Team performed at the Phoenix with as much energy as a leg-humping Chihuahua. They also had about the same amount of appeal: they were cute, yet annoying. During their gig in Toronto, all six members amazingly achieved the feat of cheesily smiling for the whole one-hour show. They also didn't stop jumping around like prepubescent teeny boppers at a Pussycat Dolls concert. The main offender was MC Ninja, whose dance moves looked like they were choreographed by a 12-year-old.



But all this corny behaviour, which was laid on even thicker by sticky sweet post-mod pop from their debut album "Thunder, Lightning, Strike," was exactly what the fans were after. The sold-out crowd obediently cheered out "Go Team!" when they Brits told them to and they grooved to the TV-themed instrumentals that were accompanied on screen by montage footage.

It was like watching a game of musical chairs as the band members gaily swapped instruments after almost every song. Frontman Ian Parton went from the guitar, to the drums, to the harmonica. Silke Steidinger played the drums, guitar, keys and melodica. And Sam Dook made the rounds on the guitar, banjo and the drums. But for all their talent as musicians, there was something too rehearsed about them that made them seem unworthy of their "indie pop" title.

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