

STAND UP AND SPIT

Ranting poetry, swearsy poetry, boozy poetry

Joe Strummer Interview

1 Reply

Joe Strummer has a few words with Glasgow zine **Trash 77** in their third issue. There's also a live review of The Clash in Edinburgh, supported by The Jam, Buzzcocks, The Slits, Subway Sect and The Prefects. That's quite some line up! The 'zine is from 1977.



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Interviewing Joe Strummer was a great climax to a great night of new wave sounds at Edinburgh's Playhouse. Having just seen an unforgettable set by The Clash, I struggled exhausted down through the corridors of the theatre and was eventually ushered into a smallish room with a dozen others for the BIG interview. Five minutes later Nick Jones and the charismatic Strummer entered with CBS Reps. Gordon Wallace from CBS introduced me to Joe and we set off for a corner to conduct the so called interview. Put it turned out to be like having a chat with one of my mates. Joe is so genuine and down to earth that I felt really relaxed talking to him.

If the new wave needed an advertising man then Joe would get the job without trying. He answered everything that the small gathering of admirers asked. First I asked him how the band had enjoyed the Edinburgh gig and why they hadn't played Glasgow. "We were too far away from the audience tonight" he commented. "There was an orchestra pit in front of the stage, I didn't like that. I don't know why we didn't play Glasgow, we would have liked to play there, but the last time we were supposed to was on the Anarchy tour and we were banned on that!" Rumour has it that The Clash and the other four bands on tour couldn't play Glasgow, because of expected violence. The Clash are likely to play somewhere in Glasgow this summer though. Still on Scottish gigs, Joe explained the proceedings at the previous night's bash in Aberdeen. Joe had a lot of problems with his guitar and the band did a few numbers with the man on vocals alone. Then "at the break in "Police and Thieves", I got so fed up with the guitar that I slung it to the side of the stage and broke two of the machine heads". I was anxious to hear what he thought of the other bands on the bill, he liked them all.

"The Subway Sect are my favourite band at the moment" he said they've got a lot of good ideas. "I like The Jam, Paul Weller is a good guitarist. We sent a telegram to The Jam after they said they'd be voting Conservative at the next election in the NME." I'd better explain, the

Tories won a by-election that week (in Manchester, I think) and the telegram ran something like "Congratulations on your victory. Maggie will be pleased!" At this point in the interview, Joe started handing out cans of lager and as I downed one of these, I noticed that now all but The Jam were present in this small room. The Slits were singing "Police and Thieves" and dancing a lot. "Why doesn't anyone in Scotland like reggae" asks drummer Palmolive. "Here they all say The Clash album is great but that "Police and Thieves" urgh! "I think it's the best track on the album". Having heard that the Roxy in London was full of yer actual poseurs, I asked Joe what he thought of said persons. "I hate fuckin' poseurs" came the sharp reply "and London's full of 'em". Then came the signal to clear out and I headed with the clan for the Esso Motor Hotel just outside of Edinburgh, where all the bands were staying except the Buzzcocks and The Jam. There I managed to have words with Nick Jones and Joe again. I also spoke to The Jam for a while, they were there for a drink, but I can't remember much of the conversation. Also had a chat with chief Clash Roadie - the incredible Rodent. And that's about it. The Clash are the best new wave band in Britain today and don't let anyone tell you different.

WORDS: Woolly Heater

PIC: Walt Davidson (not taken at Edinburgh, you weren't allowed to take pictures there as you might have already heard.)



CLASH/JAM/BUZZCOCKS/SUBWAY SECT/SLITS/ 6

This gig was ages ago now, but I thought that I'd review it anyway, it was so good. I missed the Slits and the Buzzcocks and what I did see of Subway Sect I didn't really like. They have this (contrived?) nervousness which put me off a bit so I only watched them playing one or two numbers, maybe they're too scared in case they become good I dunno. I missed a small bit of The Jam's set because I was in the disco/bar and they don't announce that the next band is coming on, what a place the bar is, the D.J. was playing all sorts of disco dross and all the plastic punks were popping to any of the crap that he played, they were just a bunch of posers, it put me off, these are the sort of people that get real new wavers a bad name. Someone shouted that The Jam were on and we all ran downstairs, I'd really been looking forward to seeing them after hearing a superb album. They played a brilliant set comprising of most of if not all of their album except the Batman Theme, which was a bit disappointing, but what they did play, none could complain. Paul and Bruce were popping about the stage and the crowds were going crazy. Audiences up here seem to go crazy at most new wave acts, probably because we are starved of decent bands and what we do get is well worth waiting for. The Jam encored with "Ricks and Mortars". I think, I had been drinking a lot so nothing is too clear. The curtain fell and the tension mounted waiting for The Clash, so I went back to the bar for a while for some lubrication, which was well needed after the sweat I'd lost watching The Jam. After a few pints I went back down to the main theatre which gave me a short time to observe the kind of audience. It was really mixed, all sorts had turned up to see The Clash mainly, but they all seemed to be enjoying it, which is the main thing I suppose. The shadow of Nick Jones behind the curtain brought up cheers from the crowd who were now well pissed and impatient, but not for long, up went the curtain and the moment we had all been waiting for had arrived, we were ~~XXXXXX~~ actually seeing The Clash, next for the first time. The crazed audience went mad with delight and soon the whole theatre was shaking with pogoers. Joe opened the set by singing "Edinburgh is burning" and burst straight into "London's Burning" a more suitable choice would have been impossible to make, everyone erupted including me so I lost track a bit of what was played after this. The gorillas employed as bouncers were in good/bad form, if you danced in the aisles, they gave you a few warnings, if they seen you in the aisles again, you were out! At one point Joe said "If there are any bouncers listening, they're only dancing" the crowd roared their agreement. The tension dropped a bit when Paul broke a bass string and he took ages trying to fix it, at this point Joe got out a radio and started playing around with the dials and it was obvious that they were going to play "Capital Radio".

Bruce Foxton ("here comes the Rickenbacker kid"- Joe) ran on and lent Paul his bass and they were all set to go again. The played all of the album plus "Pressure Drop", but ~~XXXXX~~ I don't think anyone cared what they played because it was utter chaos. It was a gig to remember and The Jam were just as enjoyable as The Clash so everyone was very happy, I hope they come N back soon. Later in the dressing rooms, I was too pissed to interview anyone, someone done it for me.

CLASH AND JAM PICS BY WALT DAVIDSON.



PAUL . RICK . BRUCE . NICK . JOE

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1 thought on "Joe Strummer Interview"

Gordon Munro August 21, 2018 at 4:12 pm

Great . I was there , still have the free game the Jam handed out , and it that now all a game changer . Blew the doors wide open .

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