

Words and Deeds

BATHYMETRY

**Southbound Attic Band – The Big I Am - Lara Boundy
Ugly Man Records @ Aigburth Cricket and Bowls Club**

We focus on our city-centre venues and their troubles but perhaps we should also turn the spotlight onto our suburban sister venues. With that in mind, I sally forth, map book in hand (on the car seat, officer), to Aigburth Cricket and Bowls Club for a homespun album launch – with homemade cake – courtesy of BATHYMETRY band.

A community hub, established in 1888 and now under threat from – guess what? – developers, the Club is a pleasant, traditional venue at the end of a quiet street. Tonight, it has been turned into insect-ville, with Bathymetry's amazing album artwork echoed by large drawings of beetles, ladybirds and other creepy-crawlies which decorate the room, and temporary insect tattoos available to buy.

First up is LARA BOUNTY, a young singer/guitarist playing gentle folk melodies. She's followed by THE BIG I AM, one guy playing a ukulele, the other playing what research later tells me is a Puerto Rican cuatro (which has an extremely lovely shape). They up the tempo with some accomplished playing and harmonising, finishing with a track called Collecting Skies, which is well worth looking up on their Facebook page.

The tone changes somewhat with the arrival of SOUTHBOUND ATTIC BAND, and their take on more traditional, Celtic-tinged folk music, incorporating guitar, harmonica, bass and vocals. There's a lot of love in the room for this band, evidenced by the pleas for them to play an infamous, slightly risqué number as they finish their set. They oblige, with the caveat that they've already been banned from one venue today...

After a very long break, Bathymetry finally take to the stage in support of their album launch. Their songs are full of tradition, wit and darkness – standout track Goblin Fruit not only referencing Christina Rossetti's Goblin Market but also including a play on words in the title (goblin/gobblin') – but also channel funky bass and drums, some beautiful, almost discordant, harmonising, and a stop-start element that makes you hold your breath as you wait to hear what the next note will bring. This is especially evident on Evil Leather Jacket (oh, those insects get everywhere...) and brings a sinister darkness to a band I would hesitate to describe as 'folk'. And, if this is folk, then it's 21st-century folk, incorporating fairy tales and nature, sure, but seasoning these with a psych-y, sensual, menacing edge.

If anything lets them down, it's their slightly too relaxed attitude towards this gig: delayed appearance, band members leaving the stage at various intervals. However, they're young, they clearly have originality and talent, and enjoy what they do, and their hearts are in the right place – cf. not just their support of the Club but also their acknowledgement of the 70th anniversary of D-Day with We'll Meet Again – so, hopefully, they will continue to plumb the underwater depths of our tradition-soaked isle.

Let me turn your deeds into words