

#16 1/2

Party Fears

SPECIAL ROCK AWARDS FRONT-LINE REPORT

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So. Shit, eh? Boy, do I have a lot to tell you.

1. The West Coast Rock Awards, now called the WA Music Industry Awards, aka WAMIS. To cut a long and potentially juicy story short, I won the top award of the night. The top award of the FUCKING night. Jesus.

Did you ever realise just how fuckin' ugly industry people actually are? Uggghh. Not just on the faces... they're ugly on the inside. Ugly in the bones. In the soul. All the ind. people were fat and ugly.

The top award is the Golden WAMI, for services to the industry. This is for publishing PR for the last year, one presumes. Needless to say, I'm not here to serve the industry. The industry services itself and each other to its shrunken little dick's content.

Start: the industry party; Vivienne and I got there 7:45pm. Free beer, bobwbon/coke and cocktails, the last if you could catch the performance artist doing the tray-balancing act with the green things on top. Too many green things, that must have been it. The clear deep green things were nice (Madori-based... I lurrrve Madori), but the creamy green things were distinctly dodgy and to be avoided... sort of an alcoholic spearment milkshake. I eventually got some drinks and sunk them very fast indeed. I could see this was going to be one of those nights. I'd paid my thirty dollars and I was getting the free drinks I could. Dr. Duke would have been proud of me. I was sinking spirits and greenery as fast as possible. Then we found out table. I was sinking fast by this time.

Must admit that the snacks at the industry party were really nice. Neither Viv nor I had eaten so we nixed all the cheese we could and ate some mutant strawberries. Must have been industry strawberries -- two or three inches long and warped to one side. Weird food. (I wrote a strawberry shaped like a clitoris.)

Ugly, ugly, UGLY scene, as my friend Johanna would say. The upstairs was sardined with industry people. A sea of gross mutant mongoloid people with no ears. That's why I started on the drink. (Alcohol features prominently in this tale.) If you'd been there you'd have understood to the depths of your soul that it was either the drink or get out the Uzi GMM RIGHT THERE AND THEN and start production on Terminator III without delay. I found about three people I actually wanted to talk to and we went downstairs to the tables.

Down to the tables. OK, we're at the tables now. Metropolis Concert Club. This has a rat's maze of six hundred bars with intertwining stairways connecting, wrapped around a dancefloor below. The tables were on the dancefloor. I was with Viv, Bernard (Largham, Viv's brother) and Nathan from [redacted]. Nathan had arrived late but was tanked up beforehand. Sometimes you just gotta go in armed.

Tonight was the night. There are some nights when being a rowdy drunk is the only option. Nothing else makes any kind of sense. Tonight was the night.

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Hey, did you realise that we work in the most important part of the music industry? Think about it. Tell people that's what you do for a living.

The awards slithered their way along. Let's be fair: The WA Music Industry Association is a decent org. with good people. (Remember, I was on the committee for three years and only quit because of time problems with work.) The possibility of a Rock Awards Ceremony being meaningful does exist and is there. But the industry itself is convinced that the year is nineteen seventy twenty one, if you see what I mean. The daisy chain of noses up asses still circles around and around, oblivious to its surroundings.

(That's where rowdy drunks come in.)

Kim Salmon won two or three of the awards he was put up for, which is a bit of justice. (Rob Grant from Poons Head picked 'em up for Kim him. One day I will ask Rob where his accent is from.) Healers got a pile. There were a few real sparks of truth and justice in this year. The fire came at the end. I stood up and loudly yelled approval for anyone I liked. Sometimes you just gotta. Sometimes you've got to let the people know. Sometimes you've got to give advance warning. Sometimes justice needs to be spoken. Sometimes, you've just gotta tell 'em.

I know, the "industry" in Perth is still two nations. They may try to mix 'em, but they're oil and water. But oil and water don't sometimes explode on contact. This was one nation. I was representing the other. The under-nation. "We're the Worlocks. Coming up."

I kept drinking, as did we all. We had nowhere near enough. I don't think I could have drunk enough in that entire night to throw up. Cans were -- ~~was~~ are you sitting down? -- three dollars eighty. Three fucking dollars and fucking eighty FUCKING cents. I had two cans which, on top of the greenies, did me.

Final round of awards. Best band/artist. Songwriter. (Salmon got one or both of these, I think -- have to check mah book.) The A-C Smith Award for Excellence, forget who. Then the golden WAMI.

(Hey, if Salmon won two, is that a double WAMI? Ho he ect.)

I spent the final round trying to psych myself sober real fast. Like in a car when you've had too much and you have to drive. Didn't manage it so well, but there you go.

I remember in P.J. O'Rourke's (is it O'Rourke or O'Rourke?) Holidays In Hell, how he spoke of the Beirut bar where the journalists stayed. The bartender gave out something you could take that would let you keep right on drinkin' after the twentieth one, for the simple reason that you would really fucking need to.

Final award. The Golden WAMI. "David Gerard." Fuck me.

Weaved up there, notes in hand. Bernard had handed me a speech that he had made up for if the Brewsters had won anything, which they didn't. A real "you'll never play in this town again" speech: a list of bands who deserve the lot (this year's crop of talent, more or less -- see pg) and ending with a "Fuck the lot of you." Entirely truthful, of course. Bernard and I understood: it's a jihad. We were here to defend the true nation. Sometimes, you've just gotta tell 'em.

