

Did you see Chimp and the Customer?

Brighton, Monday 24 February: flatmate asks if I feel like seeing a band. We have spent the last three years discussing seeing more bands, more comedy, going to the theatre, getting a bit of culture. Needless to say we have remained uncultured, but in our defence, we have been to the cinema a couple of times! With no idea what the band was like, other than being locals and calling themselves “Chimp”, I threw sobriety to the wind and agreed to go and see them on Thursday 27.

Wednesday evening: aforementioned flatmate lends me Chimp CD stating “It’s definitely one of the best new finds of recent years”. With only a day to learn the words I put the CD in my stereo and pressed repeat. (NB; Word Learning is a pre-“gig” necessity, making you look like you know your stuff, even though I can’t sing for s*** and try not to open my mouth in a singing type way for fear of what effect it might have on peoples’ later lives).

She was right. They were really good and with the album being all of 24 minutes, 49 seconds long, learning the words was not the mean challenge I had psyched myself up for (oh, ok, I didn’t really learn the words, but I *did* press the repeat button).

Thursday 27 February: Off to Komedia. Paid extortionate entry fee of £4, (£3 if you’re a smelly student), and headed towards the bar, where we bumped into some people my flatmate knows. They are apparently die-hard fans – (of the band, not the Bruce Willis movies). This is at least the *THIRD* time they have seen Chimp and they have *ALL* the albums. (There is currently only one out, but that still qualifies as “all”).

With an 8.30 start, the “special guests” get on stage at about 9.30. The poster had said they were 100 Animals or something (I might have made that name up, but I think they were 100 something or others). The 100 Something Or Others however were not going to be entertaining us tonight. Instead we got The Customer, who had only been roped in the day before and were missing their bassist.

Hell, who needs a bassist though? They were excellent. One of the blokes that sang had a funny beard and the other was dead skinny, but why hold that against them when they sound so good? I don’t know where they went afterwards or if you can get hold of an album anywhere, but if you see them advertised – go.

So then Chimp come on. There were loads of them (about 7) and they all wore unfamiliar haircuts. There were beards again. They look like they were all at the bottom of the height chart when they were in Primary School, but they were looking at being tall, and they actually are. The lead singer, with his NHS milkbottle-base glasses and beard you could nest birds in exudes a certain kind of cool that expresses itself in the kind of dancing that looks like thigh-strengthening exercises.

Other than the girls on the strings they all looked like they were really enjoying themselves. We certainly were. They opened with “waiting for the ice to melt”, from their first album; guess who realises she knows the words? Don’t worry, I didn’t sing, but it was hard not to. Most of the songs on the first album are fairly ballady in an orchestral pop kind of way, but don’t let the word pop put you off, they are much better than that.

At the end, when they were chatting to various people in the crowd, my flatmate and I went and asked them a stupid question, but they didn't seem to mind, so we love them all the more!

All in all an excellent night and a good bit of culture had by all. In support of local Brighton culture you should really go and get yourself the album. I had to order it, which I consider a bit poor – them being locals and all, but don't let that deter you. Get yourself to a music shop and buy it, it's called Lowfer and they have a new album coming out in May which I reckon should be worth checking out too. Besides, it's a steal at £7.99!