

News



PHOTO: PETER MAYO

The council officer who approved the Boobs on Bikes parade consent is standing by her decision. Council's events and promotions manager Annabel Lush says the council approved consent to minimise the disruption an event like this would cause. "Providing consent means we are able to make concessions on parade length and time to minimise disruptions," says Lush. "Thank God we live in a country like we do, where we can have freedom of expression." Catholic-based group, Family First International, is outraged the Auckland City Council has given consent to something they feel legitimises pornography. Spokesman Brendon Malone says: "The reality is if you or I were to run down Queen St naked we would probably get arrested for doing that. "But, here we have a group that has gone and got council approval and police support to do the very same thing." More than 50 men and women are expected to parade bare-breasted down Queen St to mark the start of the Erotica expo. The parade, in its third year, has proved a particularly contentious issue, as this is the first year organiser Steve Crow has sought council consent. Crow says he is usually against seeking approval or consent for anything. "Boobs on Bikes will proceed with or without their consent," he says. "I was seeking their assistance with crowd and traffic control only after our 2005 parade where a few members of the public got a bit enthusiastic and caused a traffic hazard."

**Yes,
Yes,
Yes!**

— Anika Forsman

Auckland rocks, but it ain't loud enough

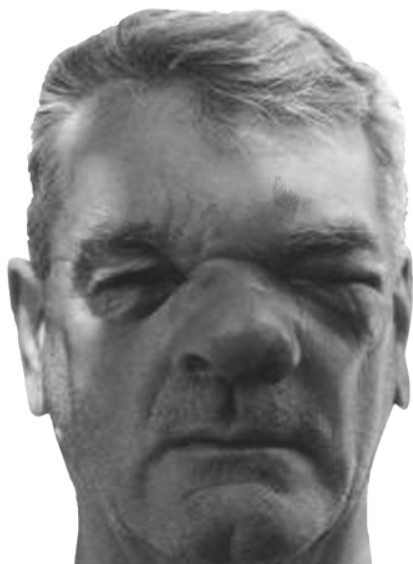
Auckland's live music scene is pumping, but Mathew Grocott finds there is still room for improvement.

Musicians in Auckland say the city's live music scene is as healthy as it has ever been but there is still room for improvement. Cold by Winter vocalist Leon Hall says live music in New Zealand is currently in a transition stage. It goes through cycles of being vibrant and active, then slows down with venues opening and closing, he says. "It's hard to tell whether it's about to take off or whether it will drop off again," he says, although he is optimistic about the future. The former front man of hardcore band Don't, Hall has performed live for 15 years, playing supporting slots for high profile international acts Fear Factory, Mudvayne and Sunk Loto. He says the number of bands playing gigs at present is healthy but the number of venues for rock acts is a disappointment. The situation for hip hop acts is the opposite, he says. Some bands have got around this problem by setting up their own shows. "The punk scene has a real DIY ethic so they'll rent out a hall and put on their own show," he says. Chris Yong of rock band Redline and former guitarist for platinum selling four-piece Tadpole, says the music industry

is in a strange place. He says nation-wide New Zealand music is in a real flat spot, after the explosive growth over the last seven years. There is no buzz about any upcoming acts in New Zealand music he says, which suggests the industry is starting to slow down. He says because it is hard to gain media exposure bands have to get out there and play live. "It's their only avenue." So while local music is on a downward slope nationally, the local live scene is in good shape. And while there are only a few venues, those that exist are big backers of local music. "Hysteria is a huge backer of New Zealand music. At a staple venue like the King's Arms you have to book a show six months in advance." Talented young guitarist Mathew Hatton, 19, says it is easy for young bands to get gigs in Auckland. He says he could easily line up spots playing at bars such as Hysteria. The former Avondale College student says there are a lot of young bands playing their music live, and they must be on top of their game to get noticed. But Hall says Auckland does not compare well to Wellington or Australian cities. "Wellington always has a good

live scene." People in Wellington are not afraid to listen to all types of music. In Auckland it is more segregated, he says. In the early 90s electronic music superseded grunge and the live scene went in to a downturn as DJs became the vogue. Apart from the hardcore scene there was a dearth of live local music. But six years ago there was a resurgence, led by bands like Tadpole, where live rock music became really popular again. "There was just an explosion of New Zealand music," says Hall. That success had a trickle down effect opening more doors for other bands. Yong would like to see more people out at shows supporting local bands. "There's only a select number of people who will go out and see live music." Bands will get good attendance at a gig with a purpose, such as an album or video launch, he says. "But a lot of people don't want to see the same band six times a year." Hall's advice for new bands wanting to play gigs is to go along to shows and talk to bands they like. "If someone likes you they're more likely to play with you."

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