

# SHOWtime!

ONSTAGE HAPPENINGS, LIVE AND IN PERSON...

## MY VITRIOL EDINBURGH, LIQUID ROOMS

By the time My Vitriol commence their set at Edinburgh's Liquid Rooms, the venue is sticky with beer and sweat. This London quartet are a band of contrasts. Catchy riffs nestle inside cinematic, almost symphonically-structured songs; fragile guitar noodlings give way to crushing wall-of-sound choruses, and the moody anguish which colours most of the Vitriol repertoire is occasionally displaced by the sheer exuberance of a band enjoying the first night of a new tour. To me, My Vitriol bear a real resemblance to the Smashing Pumpkins – dynamically-contoured melancholia built upon emotive vocals. Like Pumpkins pummeller Jimmy Chamberlin, drummer Ravi Kesavaran mixes intelligent grooves with speedy single-stroke snare work, tom-heavy build-ups, and left-handed crash accents. From the double-kick punctuation of 'Vapour Trails' to the seven-beats time signature of 'Moodswings', he deftly steers the band through a maze of shifting dynamics and emotions.

All this is lapped up by a mainly teenage crowd – some with parents in tow – though fairly oppressive security measures make the kids a little tentative about dancing. Even so, My Vitriol's dark and caustic brand of rock makes for an intense gig experience – leaving us sweaty but exhilarated as we tumble out into the streets of Auld Reekie. **Jane Boxall**

## BRUISE YORK, FIBBERS

Sunday evening in York, and sunshine is seeping in through the blinds as Bruise take to the Fibbers stage. They waste no time, kicking into the stripped-down backbeat and folk-inflected melody of 'Excuse Me', with drummer Jim Kimberley providing angular harmonies to Isobel Morris' deft vocal lines. Together with bassist Graham Skinner, the trio opt for an in-your-face formation, lined up together along the front of the stage.

Of course, it's always good to see a drummer at the fore, especially one as tight and resourceful as Jim. His kit style finds beauty in simplicity, punching out crisp, solid grooves on a minimal set-up. No toms, and no real fills either, but the drumming stays fresh and interesting through skilfully graded dynamics – barely-audible ghosting fills in the spaces between chunky snare backbeats, and kick and cymbals are nailed to the beat with concrete precision. While singing, Jim triggers various repeated samples without once interrupting the kit groove – he makes this feat of coordination seem effortless!

Bruise get an impressively full sound from their three-piece line-up – particularly in rock-out closing song 'Mr Rat' – and largely this is due to having such a versatile drummer. With only one mic, two pads and a two-piece kit, he's proof that often less can be more.

**Jane Boxall**