

The Look

Paul Gorman



Nipped back to Chelsea Space gallery yesterday for a better peak at Mick Jones' Rock & Roll Public Library, the environment/junkstallation unveiled last week at a packed private view.

The aim of the show is to present for public consumption the sheer amounts of "stuff" Jones has collected since he was a football, fashion and music-mad teen. This is all now housed in two giant lock-ups in west London, one of which acts as the rehearsal studio and writing space for **Carbon/Silicon**, Jones' band with old friend Tony James.



The studio lock-up is lined with red velvet and features a changing selection of posters, books, mags, DVDs, record sleeves, toys and games intended to spark creative ideas; as a one-time art student Jones proves himself adept at creating an environment.



Yesterday the exhibition/installation did indeed have the air of a library; visitors, including students from the **Chelsea College Of Art** behind Tate Britain (where Chelsea Space is situated), flicked through the mags, books, records and ephemera, while monitors screened videos and movies and the sound system blasted a typically Jones mix of rock&roll, country, dub and his own music.



We were there to have a gander at the threads, of which there are many spotted around, including several shirts designed and made for The Clash by **Alex Michon** and **Krystyna Kolowska** (as outlined in Chapter 22 of **THE LOOK**) and Mick's incredibly distressed and bleached Levi's jacket, which brought back memories of 84/5, the cover of the first **B.A.D. album**, and The Bottom Line clip first spied flickering in the corner of **BOY**.



As you'd expect, there's a fair selection of hats, including those worn by Jones on the cover of BAD singles **V Thirteen** and **Just Play Music** and the Dread At The Controls helmet in the clip for The Clash's **The Call-Up**.



There are naturally quite a few contributions from James, Jones' former partner in **London SS**, including a **Sigue Sigue Sputnik** toy, which provides an excuse to show SSS in this purely nuts performance of the great (Stock Aitken Waterman-produced) **Success** and **Rio Rocks** from Brazilian TV show Fastao in 1988. Flaunt it!

Chelsea Space director Donald Smith has put on a series of singular shows over recent years, including Riot Of Our Own, about the hey-day of Rock Against Racism, a five-week occupation by the team from architects Will Alsop, the work of Steve Thomas (co-designer **Big Biba**) and I Feel Alright, a retrospective on the great London store **Burro**.



It was great to see **The Globe** sign looking so well preserved; this brought back an entirely different set of memories from the 90s of that groovy space in Talbot Road. Didn't even know it was still **open**.



Some - among them, we understand, the estimable **Jah Wobble** - believe the collection betrays the self-conscious approach of punk's original west London contingent, and the show certainly contains elements of The Clash's "Last Gang In Town" bloke-ish mythologising.

But Jones and James' hearts are definitely in the right place; far better those that are interested - and Smith tells us they're receiving around 150 visitors a day - have a chance to touch, feel and enjoy this vast and at times peculiar collection than it moulder in a lock-up somewhere off the M40. On the evidence of yesterday's attendance, there is as much interest from women as men, which is encouraging; too often this area is the domain of anally-retentive middle-aged geezers.



What THE LOOK wants to know is: what happened to Mick and Tony's matching **You're Gonna Wake Up** tees, as sported the fateful night they met Bernie Rhodes in 1975?

Mick Jones' Rock & Roll Public Library runs until April 18 at Chelsea Space, 26 John Islip Street, London SW1p 4JU. Tel:

+44 (0)7841 8783129.

