**Chameleons UK skip theatrics to give exuberant concert at Spit**

**THE CHAMELEONS UK and THE MIGHTY LEMON DROPS in concert at the Spit in Boston on Thursday, February 26.**

**BY DONALD YEE**

The Chameleons UK and the mighty Lemon Drops played at Spit in Boston on Thursday for the benefit of those fans who missed the chance to attend their sold-out show at The Metro the day before. Judging by the performances on Thursday, these fans are fortunate to have gotten a second chance to see the bands in action, particularly the Chameleons.

Both groups are from the United Kingdom and are currently touring the United States to promote their new albums, the Chameleons second LP, "Savage Times" (Geffen), and the Lemon Drops' "Happy Head" (Sire). These records are currently receiving heavy airplay on some college and alternative radio stations.

The Lemon Drops opened the show a half hour after the scheduled start, playing selections from their new album. Their sound might best be described as new-psych. This classification is justified both by the title of their album and by some of the lyrics, such as a line from the song "Angel" asking, "Tell me how you sound the same." Although perhaps due in part to the limited vocal range of the lead singer, this is no excuse for weak tunes, a point demonstrated shortly thereafter by the Chameleons' performance.

The Chameleons' lead singer and bassist, Birds, exhibited a similar lack of vocal range, but made up for it with an enthusiastic, strong voice. Unlike many other bands (Bon Jovi comes to mind), the Chameleons emphasized substance over style. They are not a pretty group and during the concert there were no smoke bombs, fog machines, flying legs, or other overdone theatrics. Although rock bands should entertain, the Chameleons do not go the same path as other groups who tend to emphasize the visual aspects to the point of detracting from the music.

Dressed casually in jeans and T-shirts, they opened their set with "Swamp Thing," a moody piece from their current album. They then kept the set moving with several songs from their first album, "Script of the Bridge."

A slight change in the Chameleons' music was evident during the concert. Most of the songs from the first album were darker and more atmospheric, featuring a wall of guitar chords similar to early Echo and the Bunnymen or perhaps U2. For example, "A Person Isn't Safe Anywhere These Days" opened with guitar feedback and verbing to produce a continuous tone. The newer material, like "Swamp Thing" (although not sure), featured slightly more conventional rock guitar. However, the music was never tentative (despite the band's name) or boring.

The Chameleons continued their set without pause, packing new and old material. The show lasted until almost 2 a.m., but many faithful fans stayed on, even demanding an encore, and the band obliged by playing two more songs. It appeared that many would have stayed for more, but the club interrupted with recorded music and announcements of upcoming concerts.

Although it will be a while before the Chameleons come to Boston again, in the meantime both their albums are available domestically. Given the quality of their music, I will not be surprised if they have an even larger following the next time they come around.

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**“Not for Burning” entertainers but needs more tension in early acts**

**THE LADY’S NOT FOR BURNING Written by Christopher Fry. Directed by Thomas H. Hirshorn. Presented by the MIT Community Players at Kresge Little Theatre**

**BY STEPHEN P. BERCZUK**

The best thing we can do is make sure we are lost in like handgun. From a world of witch hunts and small town hypocrisy. "The Lady's Not For Burning" concerns itself with the issues of blindness and dealing with the realization that the world is not what we would like it to be. Though not without minor flaws, this production of Fry's study of 16th century values was entertaining.

Alan Krulick starred as Thomas Mendip, a former soldier tired of life, who comes into the mayor's house demanding that he be hanged. Richard, the town clerk (Phillip Patrone), does his best to deal with this and with the afternoon's other odd goings on.

No one wishes to grant death to the hardened misanthrope. They are more realistic in the case of Jennet (Barbara Hathaway), presumed to be a witch. As Richard tries to comprehend the imagery of the prosecution with burning, Mendip finds himself fighting for the woman's life while attempting to end his own.

Thomas Hirshorn's direction emphasized the irony of the situation, and his scenic harmony set the tone. While this put things in a proper perspective (you can't take these stubborn town folk seriously), a bit more tension would have helped keep the audience involved. We weren't faced with the reality of the threat to Jennet until the middle act, and the extent of Mendip's insane turmoil wasn't brought to our attention until the end.

The performances of the cast did fit Hirshorn's plan nicely, however. Joseph Brown worked well as the status-quo-preserving mayor. William Rudden's chaplain was, like the chaplain from "M*A*S*H," a man whose calling colliding with his ideas of society. Patrone's was by far the best performance; he lived up to the role traditionally played in the society of the time.

The strength of the Community Players remained their technical experience. Rob Gere's sound design was quite subtle, but set atmosphere quite nicely. Jon van der Meer's light design was simple and complemented the acting and Sue Dowling's set well.