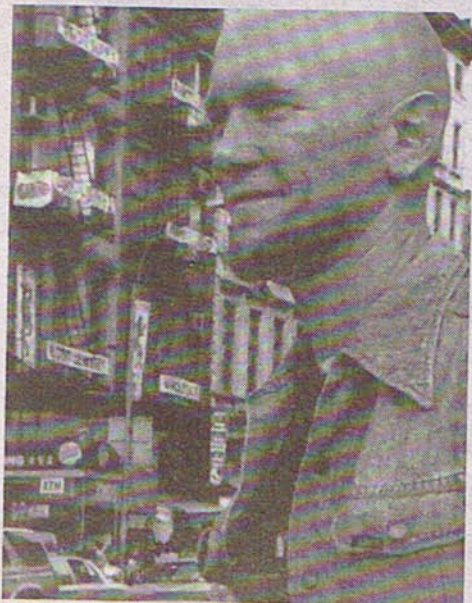


# NICK'S KNACK

26/7/06

JAYSON ARGALL marvels at the one-man achievement that is NICK MURPHY'S debut album.



Nick Murphy has been a busy bugger of late. Better known as a key founding member of Melbourne rock pop provocateurs The Anyones, he has recently become the doting father of two babies; his first solo album entitled *Breaking The Waves* and a ten week old child. "It's all been happening," he laughs with a proud, weary sigh. "It's intense, but it's amazing. I guess it's hard talking about it without sticking clichés into it really."

No such problem with the initial reviews the album has received, with Nick particularly "chuffed" about the four star write up the album received in *The Age's E.G.* on the day of interview. Fair enough too, for it is a beguiling album displaying all of Murphy's talents, not just as a songwriter but as a multi-instrumentalist - Murphy plays most of the parts himself, the majority of which was recorded and produced by his good self as well. I felt compelled to remind him that nobody likes a smart arse. "(laughs) I guess it was a lot to take on board and that's why it took a long time and became such an intense thing. I guess when I started it I didn't realise how much work it would be and to prove how deluded I was about the size of the task, I actually intended to get it out by last September."

So what was the motivation for doing a solo record in the first place? "Within a band I suppose you try and write music that conforms to a band's identity, but over the years there was some stuff I'd come up with which was more reflective of my eclectic taste in music. I mean I love singer/songwriter stuff and I love psychedelic stuff and I love country music and none of those things necessarily had a place in The Anyones. I still believe The Anyones are an amazingly eclectic band and still difficult to categorise, but I had a bunch of other stuff and now had the freedom to work with them. I just thought to myself 'Fuck, it doesn't matter, I can do anything I want!'"

As Nick implies, *Breaking The Waves* is a slight departure from the possibly more linear sounds of The Anyones, providing a far ranging scope and depth that at times evokes the melodic phrasing of The Beach Boys or The Byrds, the harmonies of Teenage Fanclub and the fragile beauty of Elliott Smith or Gram Parsons. Yet what's most impressive about the album is that it never sounds derivative, as though Nick's colouring the musical palate by numbers, but instead forges its own identity. "That would be my biggest joy, if I can achieve that," responds Nick, modestly accepting the compliment. "I think often I would be the first to say that I've been inspired by certain songs, even to the point of trying to rip off certain melodies or phrases. But, luckily, often it would come out that if I said to someone 'Oh yeah, I had that song in mind by the Beach Boys or whoever when I wrote that' and they'd say 'What! It sounds nothing like that'. I think that's the biggest challenge - to be able to use the influences that you love, without making it sound really obvious."

Yet rest assured those who might be worried that the strength of this album may result Nick breaking up The Anyones to live the high life with the Hollywood set, for the lads are planning to release their third album in a little while. "We're actually recording at the moment," Nick enthuses. "We've recorded most of the material for the next album, we're just sorting out funds at the moment for the completion of that project."

In between the bills for nappies, prams, cots, etc, no doubt.

**Breaking The Light is available on Cavalier through Shock. Nick Murphy launches the album this Friday at the Northcote Social Club.**