



Sean Thomas, Kisschasy, 2007

Introduction - David Chalker

Guys, Girls, Guitars is Andrew Mayo's first solo exhibition and a small taste of a very large body of work. Over the last decade Mayo has photographed hundreds of local and international bands and musicians in live music performance. His lens traverses the stage and the audience to give us a feel for the excitement and abandon of live music.

There is energy and vitality in Andrew Mayo's work. These are images where the viewer is part of the event, amid the excitement, fervour and heat of the performance. Mayo is not an opportunistic observer standing outside the event—he is very much part of the experience. He brings us the obligatory big moments and grand gestures of the concert, the theatre and the frenzy, but equally he gives us some very fine portraits—Daniel Johns, Patience Hodgson, Peter Garrett and Tim Rogers amongst them—of musicians working hard at their art and their livelihood.

Performers are deified by their admirers and demonised by their detractors. Very few people hold themselves up for critical appraisal the way live music performers do. The romantic idea that musicians live an idyllic life involving few hours on stage or in a recording studio ignores the very tough reality of their work—the grind, sweat and tears of finding acceptance and the genuinely hard work of performance. The musicians in Guys, Girls, Guitars are real people who have earned the right to be seen, heard and adored by their audiences in Australia and around the world.

In my view the important point of this exhibition lies in this rounding out of the story of music performance. The drama, energy and adulation associated with bands and the music they present in big stage concerts, diverse outdoor venues and pubs is given a human dimension in Mayo's images. We see an intense but sensitive Tim Rogers in portrait and a manic, frenetic, theatrical Tim Rogers fronting You Am I. Musicians are people and Andrew Mayo's work takes us into their world, a tough world too often misrepresented and misunderstood.



Patience Hodgson, The Grates, 2006



Tim Rogers, 2007

Guys, Girls, Guitars was supported by a grant from the ACT Arts Fund, support that is critical to the health and development of the arts. Many of the images are from live music performances in Canberra.

PhotoAccess is very pleased to present Guys, Girls, Guitars by Andrew Mayo, in the HUW DAVIES GALLERY at the Manuka Arts Centre.



Michael Franti & Spearhead, 2006

Artist Statement - Andrew Mayo

Music, particularly live music, is an intrinsic part of Australian culture.

Over the last 10 years I've used photography to capture a time, place and mood in Australian music that will never be repeated.

Guys, Girls, Guitars is a celebration of live music, showcasing the who's who of Australian rock 'n' roll in full flight, including Midnight Oil, Powderfinger, Silverchair, The Living End, You Am I and Grinspoon, along with well-known international artists such as Matchbox 20 and Michael Franti.

The images in the exhibition, selected from thousands of digital files and grainy negatives, cover a diverse range of live music scenarios, from sweaty, dimly-lit pubs to expansive, sun-baked festival stages. I'm proud to be presenting this work for the first time.

Shooting live music can be as frustrating as it is fun. Stage lighting is generally poor and constantly changing. You have no control over your subject. And to top it off, you're given minimal time—usually only three songs—to create something memorable. It's challenging, but I love it!

Hopefully the images resonate with you, regardless of your age or musical taste, and rekindle fond memories of your own live music experiences. Enjoy!



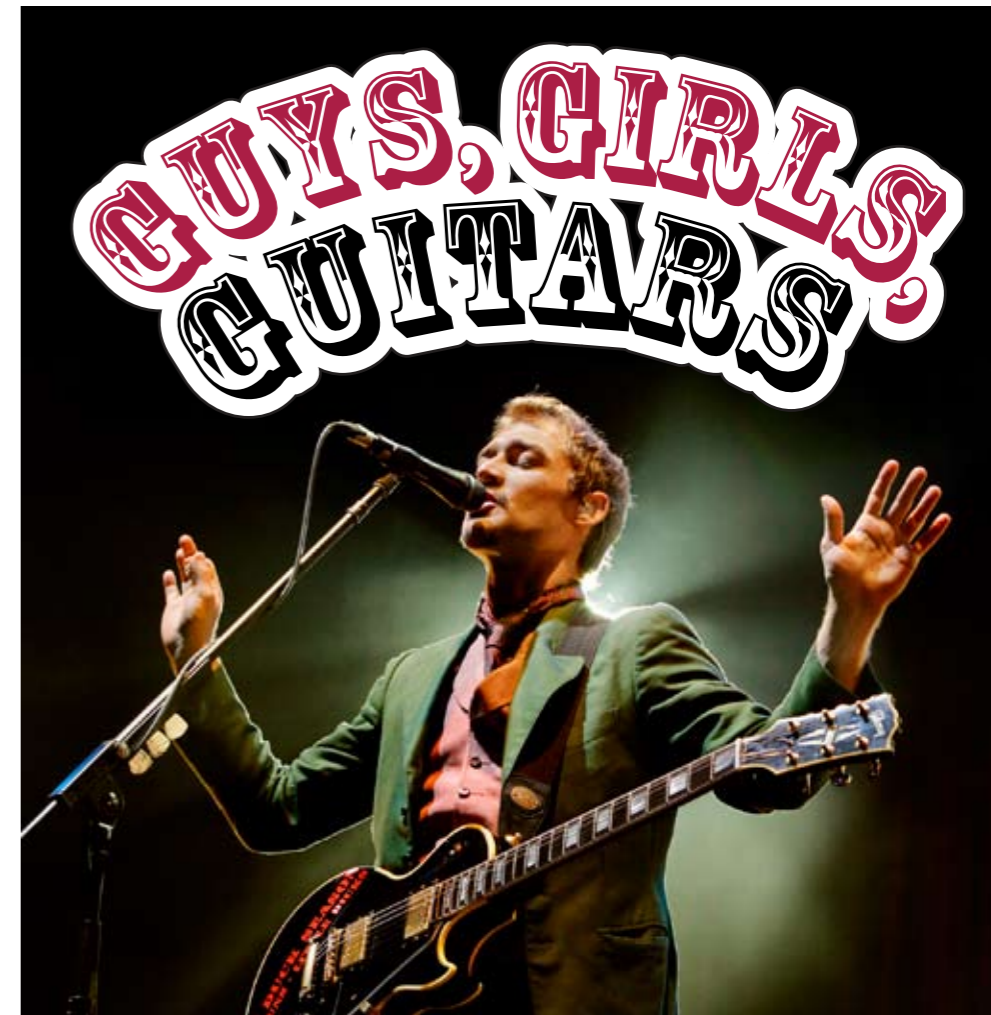
Michael Franti & Spearhead, 2006



Peter Garrett, *Midnight Oil*, 1998



Allison Robertson, *The Donnas*, 2008
Cover Image: Daniel Johns, *Silverchair*, 2007



Andrew Mayo is a principal photographer for Canberra's BMA magazine and a founding partner of Juice Wedding Photography. Visit: www.andrewmayo.com.au
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Andrew Mayo

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