

Michael Boustany

La Mama
Shibuya, Tokyo, Japan

Contact: Michael Boustany, mchlemil@gmail.com
Web: michaelboustany.com
AMP Username: michaelboustany
The Players: Michael Boustany, vocals, guitar; Kei Takasugi, guitar; Kiyo Tahara, bass; Kazuki Shimano; drums.

Material: Michael Boustany's music is mostly comprised of jangly blues-flavored pop-rock, with catchy choruses. His lyrics tend to focus on the ups and downs of relationships, without resorting to too many clichés. Arrangements follow the traditions of Crowded House or the Beatles, while still remaining fresh enough to keep one's interest. The slightly reggae-flavored standout "My Side of the Bed" is a funky treat, with a pre-chorus teasing like a lover that makes you chase them around the four poster.

Musicianship: While Boustany doesn't possess a huge vocal range, like many of the classic rockers that inspired him, he has complete control over every note. His guitar playing seems effortless, much like the playing of Alex Lifeson of Rush, whom he claims is his greatest influence. As for the supporting cast, Tahara's bass lines support each song as if he has been studying



Michael Boustany: Blues-flavored pop-rock that features catchy choruses.

the genre for years, and drummer Shimano punctuates each beat as if to celebrate it and drive every idea home. Meanwhile, Takasugi's playing comes across like a guitarist accompanying a string section, a feat he achieves via a huge array of pedals. While this embellishes each song, it might seem to distract from the mainstream pop vibe inherent in some of the songs as well.

Performance: Striding the stage like a practiced pro, Boustany simultaneously pulled off blues riffs like Santana and belted his vocal

lines like Bon Jovi. The rhythm section were a pleasure to behold. Shimano consistently smiled at the audience as if he was their best friend, while dishing out rhythms worthy of a drummer on a stadium tour. Tahara swayed and bobbed in time to Shimano's beats while locking in and expanding on the rhythms. Takasugi was the black sheep, off in his own world beneath his golfer's hat, covering the whole band with his parts.

Summary: Michael Boustany, while not breaking any new ground, is

simultaneously mainstream enough to be comfortable to the ears, while being fresh enough to encourage repeated listening. This artist would probably be right at home on any AOR radio station, and on the roster of any similar record company. His band is more than ready to support him on any necessary tours as well. Maybe they just need to reel the guitarist in a bit, or perhaps they're fine just the way they are.

—Laurier Tiernan

Afterglow

Dan McGuinness
Memphis, TN

Contact: David Michael Lee, 901-490-2457; soulshaker@bellsouth.net
Website: mspace.com/afterglowtunes
AMP Username: davo
The Players: Davo, vocals, bass, keyboards; Rod Schiller, vocals, drums; Adam Yancey, vocals, guitar.

Material: Afterglow are a close knit trio that have been performing their brand of classic rock around the Mid-South for the past several years. The band's original material can be considered new wave rock, but their live club set consists mostly of covers that keep the Memphis club owners content and the crowds on the dance floor. This trio's portfolio runs the gamut from the Cars, Billy Idol and Bad Company to Memphis Sun artists like Elvis and Johnny Cash. Set favorites include Golden Earring's "Twilight Zone" and Afterglow's own brand of Johnny Cash's "Ring of Fire."

Musicianship: Davo, Schiller and Yancey are all seasoned players who have the talent, chops and means to make this genre of music not only memorable, but imaginatively new at the same time. Bassist,



Afterglow: Fine performances of infectious tunes that embody pure and pleasing harmonies.

keyboardist and vocalist Davo and guitarist Adam Yancey take turns singing lead, while drummer Rod Schiller assists with backing vocals throughout. While each can carry a tune, Yancey is the troupe's strongest singer. His vocals range from falsetto to low bass tones, all with strength and clarity, while still playing perfect six-string solos. Davo is equally impressive with an ability to cover bass guitar and keyboards simultaneously. Schiller is a versatile

percussionist who keeps perfect time and maintains the steady rhythms needed for a band that presents such a variety of styles.

Performance: Afterglow's animated performance kept the crowd pumped up throughout this evening. Davo, Yancey and Schiller all complemented one another, as well as the edgy nature of their music, by contributing a commanding performance. The house was pack-

ed containing an attentive and appreciative crowd, with many of the audience members obviously being long-term die-hard Afterglow fans.

Summary: Known for their fine performances of infectious tunes, pure and pleasing harmonies and a charismatic live show, it's no wonder Afterglow have generated a buzz in their musical region.

—Anne O'Neary