



# Saluting troops, criticizing politics

Bad Religion and Dropkick Murphys may be humble about their success, but they've definitely got some issues waiting to be voiced

## Bad Religion and Dropkick Murphys

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Shaw Conference Centre

MIKE KENDRICK  
Design & Production Editor

I don't know why, but I did it.

It's funny to see how quickly humans can agree to the most unreal things, and man, am I ever an example to use. Speaking with Scruffy Wallace of the Dropkick Murphys is one thing: promising him I'd give a shout out to his brother in Lord Strathcona's Horse and Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry is another.

"Godspeed on the next tour in Afghanistan," he says.

For a guy who's served with the

Canadian Forces himself, and who comes from a family deeply rooted in military life, this was a simple request to honour, and perhaps it wasn't so far-fetched. Wallace, the bagpiper for the Boston-based Celtic rockers, professes just what it is that he and his bandmates stand for, and in relation to that, my task at hand was simple.

"We support the blue collar and we support our troops, as everyone should," Wallace says. "Just because we support the troops doesn't mean we support the fucking government that's putting them over there at war. I think that comes out in our music."

The Dropkick Murphys are currently co-headlining a Canadian tour with punk brethren Bad Religion. The two bands bring their own unique style to the stage, and contrast one another in

what's bound to create a resounding harmony.

"We sing a lot about the working class, because that's what we all are," says Wallace in regards to the different messages he feels the two bands express. "We're more tongue-in-cheek when we have to talk about politics, which we try not to."

Jay Bentley, bassist from Bad Religion and one of its founding members, feels more strongly about the So-Cal sextet's views on the political climate of America. Since 1980, Bad Religion has been noted for their thought-provoking lyrics on society's landscape.

"Historically, people call us a political band, but I don't see us as that," Bentley says. "I see us as a socio-political band with ideas, but not necessarily

[with specific] viewpoints that we're trying to espouse. That's politics. This is the first time historically that I can remember where we just came out and went on tour and said, 'This is wrong, and we disagree with this current Administration.'"

Bentley, however, remains humble about his band's prolific status. Despite having first plugged in their guitars in 1980, shuffling a number of members to find their current sound and even owning their own record label (Epitaph, managed by guitarist Brett Gurewitz), Bentley quips that Bad Religion is "right at about 6'1". Very average."

Despite both bands' more humble and serious motifs, though, they still make it a point to have a good time on tour.

"We do a lot of things to have fun," says Bentley, who promises a "jazz-fusion explosion" on the new tour. "If you get caught up in yourself and start thinking that somehow or another, you're some important political cog in the machine and it's important that you get out there. Eventually, you can't bear the weight of yourself, and you fall apart."

Tell that to the fans, who have flocked en masse to three Warped Tours and witnessed countless live shows, singing along to favorites like "Epiphany" and "21st Century Digital Boy." And Bentley promises that the show isn't coming to its final act for some time yet.

"As long as we're waking up in the morning, there's something to write about," Bentley says.

# Mrs Klein takes a cue from the unpleasure principle

## Mrs Klein

Directed by Julien Arnold  
Starring Coralie Cairns, Lora Brovold and Caroline Livingstone  
Studio Theatre  
Now Playing

EDMON ROTEA  
Arts & Entertainment Staff

Despite a discussion that ranges from infantile sexual fantasies to the benefits of play therapy, Studio Theatre's season opener, *Mrs Klein*, still allows audiences to be comfortable and at ease.

*Mrs Klein*, a revival play based on the work of playwright Nicholas Wright, is a story about Melanie Klein (Coralie Cairns), an aging real-life psychoanalyst whose ideas and studies were greatly influenced by the work of Sigmund Freud.

However, despite her successful career and her famous discoveries, Mrs Klein leads a troubled private life—one that is both tragic and unsettling. Not only did she receive little affection from her parents as a youth, Mrs

Klein also had to endure the deaths of her two older siblings as a child. As a young woman, she passes up medical school in exchange for children and a failed marriage.

But there are many more profound tragedies that Mrs Klein must deal with, including the truth about the shocking death of her youngest son, Hans. During this episode of her life, Mrs Klein confides in her personal assistant, Paula (Lora Brovold) while at odds with her rival academic adversary and daughter, Melitta (Caroline Livingstone).

The play would have been fantastic, if it weren't for the uninteresting plot. Fortunately, upon entering the theatre, the most striking feature of the entire production is the set design—a set that is as sophisticated and elegant as the ones found in more expensive venues, such as the Citadel Theatre or the Jubilee Auditorium.

Audiences will marvel at the interior of Mrs Klein's elegant and lavishly decorated 1930s-era apartment. With its worn and aged wooden pillars, its

classic furniture and small, corner-oriented window seat, viewers will feel right at home.

The set design is complimented with beautiful props that could have easily been featured on an episode of *Antiques Roadshow*. Whether its Mrs Klein's three-drawer filing cabinet (with a drawer assigned for papers that contain her "id," "ego" and "superego"), to her liquor cabinet, picturesque gramophone and decorated rugs, viewers will marvel at yesterday's leading-edge home furnishings.

Throughout the play, the difference between night and day is literally obvious with the ambient lighting. While the effect may seem subtle, the overall lighting not only conveys the time, but is perhaps representative of the three characters' moods.

Of course, with great set design, nice props and excellent lighting comes great acting—and the actresses of *Mrs Klein* deliver the proper medicine needed for a good production. Cairns herself delivers a convincing accent



KIMSMITH

**THE KEY TO MY LOVE** Mrs Klein will gladly accept all transferred feelings.

that not only indicates her character is an English citizen, but, in fact, a cosmopolitan European transient. Her accent is a unique recipe: strong and Germanic-sounding (the real-life Mrs Klein grew up in Austria) with a dash of other European accents—predominantly English—and perhaps a bit of Scottish and Irish added for interest.

Unfortunately, the play can be a gruelling experience, mostly because of the uninteresting plot; it lacks no apparent direction or narrative. Viewers will witness interesting dis-

cussions about Freudian psychology, Mrs Klein having emotional outbursts and breakdowns, lots of contentious arguments and even a mother-daughter fight scene. Aside from that, there's not much else.

For theatre-goers who have a genuine interest in psychology and Freudian theories, *Mrs Klein* is the right prescription for your live-theatre ailments. But for the casual theatre-goer, perhaps a rerun of *Fraiser* is more adequate if you need to be entertained by a psychiatrist.