

Rheostatics, My First Rock Concert

Dave Bidini

My first rock concert was a stadium affair.
Our dads drove us down to the front gates there,
And we looked at all the people and all their rock-n-roll hair,
And for the very first time I smelled dope in the air,
And we saw ELO, but they sucked.
But Meat Loaf was wicked, so we gave it up for the fat man.
(Gave it up for the Meat.)

My second rock show, I was offered some pot,
But I refused to be swayed or to be caught by a cop.
Geddy, Alex, Neil: they played penultimate rock,
And for the very last song they set off five flash pots,
My friends had an epileptic fit.
But the crowd cheered him on 'cause they thought that he was dancin'.
(Though that he was a fool on his back.)

My third rock show was an epochal day,
It was out at the Ex, beneath the Alpine way.
Aerosmith and Goddo, they were okay,
But when I saw the Ramones and it changed the way I saw the world.
I saw everything.
So I bought a leather jacket, cut holes in my jeans.
When my parents saw my pants, then they took away the car keys for two days.

The Specials, Gang of Four, and all the new wave.
I saw the Birthday Party play with Nick Cave.
I saw XTC twice, I thought Paul Weller was Christ.
I even met Michael Stipe, he was distant, but he was nice.
Joe Jackson saved my life:
At Massy Hall, I got up and I started to dance.
Big ol' cop, he grabbed me, and he pinned me against the stage.
Cop reached down, and he took the hat off my head.
Then Joe reached down, and he took the hat off the cop's head.
So I wriggled free, and I ran up into the balcony and swan- dived.

Now it's many years later and I'm up on the stage.
Sometimes I feel a little like a bird in a cage.
Under these lights, you're either a mouse or a sage.
Music belies one's actual age.
Is it just a passing churn (yeah, could be, could be)?
Like a rusty car, hair style, or an old shirt (shirt, shirt),
A CHUM chart, an 8 track, or a gate-fold's double live.
Oh yeah, I was there...