

# BLIND FAITH!

**LENNY KRAVITZ, BLIND MELON**



**The NEC, Birmingham  
Thursday, December 2**

UPON FIRST impression, Blind Melon's folksy Southern hippydom evokes that not unworthy but so inconclusive adjective – interesting. They're an impossible band to burden with classification, which can only be a good thing. Guitarists Chris Thorn and Rogers Stevens certainly create that minimalist retro feel we're used to from The Black Crowes and Cry Of Love, but Blind Melon's overall style is infused

with an earthy Alternative feel, a feel that can nevertheless be traced back to the '60s and that Summer Of Love.

That Blind Melon should wind up on Lenny Kravitz's 'Love' tour is consequently rather ironic. Both artists are clearly caught in a time warp, but it's the support band whose act is most devoid of pretence. Blind Melon are the heavier band too. Shannon Hoon sings like Perry Farrell and is, for what it's worth, a close childhood friend of one W Axl Rose.

To tell the truth, the association with Axl isn't one that should be given much credence. The average GN'R fan would be quite baffled by the gentle ambience of 'Change' or 'No Rain'. Hoon may have a penchant for removing his clothes at inappropriate moments, but he is a most reluctant sex symbol. An honest and emotionally motivated lyricist, Hoon also possesses a

particularly dry sense of humour, which perhaps spun out of control in Canada recently, when he is alleged to have urinated into the audience (a very wet sense of humour, then!).

But these are no highly-strung Rock star morons. They react quickly to wise-cracks from the front rows ("Give you *more* drugs?" replies Hoon. "It looks like your Mother took enough drugs in her pregnancy to last you a lifetime!"), and remain in good humour despite frequent stage invasions by Kravitz's crew, whose end-of-tour frivolities include dousing the already flu-stricken Mr Hoon in various sticky substances. You wouldn't wanna do it to Ricky Warwick.

Lenny Kravitz is an insanely popular figure, and it's easy to see why. Not only is he considered to be one of the world's Ultimate Sex Symbols, but he combines the retro guitar trips of Hendrix with the more soulful croon factor of someone like Terence Trent D'Arby. Songs like 'Always On The Run' and 'Are You Gonna Go My Way' are of course totally devoid of originality, but Kravitz's student audience clearly wasn't around the first time. Nor, for that matter, was I.

Lenny isn't exactly *Kerrang!* material, but he does serve to resurrect a bygone musical era, if only for a couple of hours. Oh, and Slash reckons that Len's music has done wonders for his love life. Allegedly.

**STEVE BEEBEE**



*Pic Ross Mallin*

**BLIND MELON**  
*(Shannon Hoon): a most  
reluctant new Rock  
sex symbol...*