

Streetheart revisited in Shields show at Dinwoodie

**Kenny Shields, The Crossing
Dinwoodie
Friday, October 28**

review by Mike Spindloe

If Kenny Shields proved one thing at Dinwoodie Friday night, it was that there can be life in rock and roll after most of your hair falls out. The former Streetheart frontman, backed by a solid four-piece band, turned in a workmanlike effort before an enthusiastic, sold-out audience.

Shields moves with more authority than passion on stage these days, but he still has the distinctive set of pipes that helped make the sound of his former band an easily identifiable one. This trademark is so strong that had the show been billed simply as Streetheart, few would have noticed any difference.

The selection of songs Shields performed drove home this point. We heard a generous dose of Streetheart hits, some

new songs which were not un-Streetheart-like, and finally some great covers: the opening "A Day in the Life" as well as a total of four Rolling Stones songs, including, of course, "Under My Thumb."

Shields appeared confident and relaxed throughout, but also curiously unaggressive, casually strolling around the stage during instrumental breaks and delivering his lines offhandedly. The band can actually be credited with generating most of the respectable amount of energy that was in the air.

Opening the show was The Crossing Edmonton band with some original material that they unfortunately declined to perform in the context of their abbreviated set. Rather they stuck to pumping out solid versions of recent Top 40 hits and oldies like Steppenwolf's "Born To Be Wild." The band displayed an impressive ability to make those songs sound as good or better than the originals, and succeeded in filling the dance floor even though the hall was still half-empty during their set.



Little Shop of Horrors' Audrey the talking plant, flanked by, left to right, Mary O'Neill, Steve Saydah and Todd Sherry.

Little Shop entertains in one-night stand at Jube

**Little Shop of Horrors
Jubilee Auditorium
Sunday, October 31**

review by Randal Smathers

What's more popular than *Spitting Image*, sings better than The California Raisins and has an even more bizarre diet than Alf? Try Audrey II, the man-eating plant that outgrows the *Little Shop of Horrors*.

The touring version of the New York musical hit was at the Jube for one show only on Sunday night. Technical problems aside, the show was quite enjoyable.

The bugs included spotlighting an extra during much of Seymour's (Todd Sherry) first song, and poor sound. The songs sounded hollow and scratchy, like an old record. This may have been a deliberate attempt to catch a 60's mood more quickly, but for the most part, they still just sounded hollow and scratchy.

The show largely followed the recent movie version very closely; *Little Shop* was a "serious" horror film first, then a stage spoof, then a movie spoof, and now a play again. Only the end was different enough

to surprise those in the audience who were familiar with the movie.

The main characters of Seymour, Audrey (Mary O'Neill), and Mashkin (Steve Saydah) were even costumed to look as much as possible like Rick Moranis et al from the movie. Perhaps because of this, the other characters were the most interesting. Chiffon, Crystal, and Ronette (Leslie Denise Alston, Bridget Fogle, and the appropriately named Shirell Ferguson) were a lot of fun in their dual roles as chorus and girl group spoof. Bryan Johnson was very versatile as Orin (the dentist), and all the minor characters. But Audrey II was the center of attention.

The ever-growing plant (operated by Kevin Kiley) has all the best lines in the show, and Michael Leon Wooley was almost as good as the movie voice of Audrey, Levi Stubbs of the Four Tops. Kiley and Wooley combined to make Audrey II very expressive: the vast vegetable was downright nasty by the end of the show.

The show was kept moving at a hectic pace, stuffed full of catchy tunes, and entirely non-intellectual, making a very enjoyable break from mid-terms.



Ron Sears

Kenny Shields at Dinwoodie: the ex-Streetheart singer is a strong vocalist but he should borrow some of Jagger's moves instead of just his songs.



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