



LYDIA LUNCH: there's egg on her face

Steve Pyke

# Food for thoughtless

## LYDIA LUNCH

Oslo

LYDIA LUNCH is a *real* rock star! She doesn't, of course, play rock 'n' roll as old Bill Haley or even Iggy Pop used to but she's steeped in the sleazy black imagery that surrounds the classic Lou and Iggy stance. The art of excess shrouded in self-indulgence.

As a paradox, the Norwegian crowd, in the spacious and expensive Rat Club, are purely second-generation. They live on hearsay and what they read in month-old music papers. Squatting in front of the stage, not applauding — merely vacant.

In a way, they really deserved each other. The captive, but by no means captivated, audience didn't really understand what Lydia was trying to do and, by the looks of it, Lydia didn't really care. She did look the part, though.

It was enormously disappointing, in truth. Lydia Lunch has a good track record but in between the opening and closing tape of 'Heaven' from *Eraserhead*, she gave nothing and got even less back. She was like a

boxed rattler whose sting was all gone.

Accompanying 'musicians' didn't help much either. The Lydia lookalike on metal pipes appeared lost and Jim Foetus on sax looked wasted. It was the epitome of self-indulgence punctuated with rambling vocals, mean stares and little else.

Music as a means of communication was the last thing on their minds and even if this show had been full of content, the delivery was lacking and the result was inevitable. But this *is* the stuff that cults are made of, the kind of performance that makes 'degenerate' a household name. Lydia Lunch is heading straight for the annals of rock ideology, only a few pages behind the sections on Joplin, switchblades and drug abuse.

The audience didn't really get the point — you had to be quick anyway as Lydia only graced the stage for about 30 minutes — and they just couldn't quite reach the pedestal on which Lunch resided. Personally, I'd seen it all before; I hear Lenny Bruce did it so much better. I just sipped my mineral water and straightened my tie.

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