

...e in the information age, the repackaging of
 ...artist's back catalogue is pretty much
 ...gatory. Most careers can be boiled down
 ...a CD or two, but the various eras of Ed
 ...pper's musical journey have demanded
 ...ttle more than that.

CHECK YOUR ED

KUEPPER story by ROSS CLELLAND

Ed-wise over the last few months,
 e's already been a four-disc set cele-
 ing the first incarnation of The Saints,
 ne few Australian bands who can

genuinely be called seminal. Then there's
Cruel But Fair, another box of three covering
 Kuepper's early-'80s work with the jazz-rock-
 noise collision that was The Laughing Clowns.

And now *This Is The Magic Mile*, another
 three-part collection that attempts to con-
 dense his flood of solo work from around 1990
 onward. For those of you keeping count, that's

no less than 10 silver spinning things, not
 much of which isn't essential Australian music
 in a number of forms.

Oh, there's also a DVD of his not-often-seen
 videos as well: *The Man, The Music, The
 Magic*. "I didn't have much to do with compil-
 ing that, I just provided the title," Mr Kuepper
 says down the line.

Such flippancy is a bit of a front. Kuepper is a
 man who thinks about music, not just his own,
 and what it means. He considers that 1990's
 purple patch with a mix of affection and
 practicality.

"Oh, it was an incredibly prolific time for me,"
 he admits. "I know there was almost this feel-
 ing of 'It's time for this month's Ed Kuepper
 album' from some people - but I never saw it
 like that. The music was developing so quickly,
 and I had a record company that was enthu-
 siastic about releasing everything I could give
 them - to have all those conditions at once
 was extraordinary.

"But I don't think I've ever seen my whole cat-
 alogue listed - I'm not sure what I'd make of it
 if I saw it all written down item by item. I may
 surprise myself with my work ethic," he smiles.

Kuepper remains a productive artist. Music for
 film being a part of his work over the last cou-
 ple of years. But some small venue residen-
 cies working through some of that back cat-
 alogue with former Clowns' drummer Jeffrey
 Wegener has him considering song based
 music again. "There's certain musical ideas
 coming - but almost so many I haven't even
 worked out the way we want to take it. I'll wait
 until it focuses better before I tell you what it
 could be.

"If you've been doing this for a time, I do have
 a real fear of ending up as some sort of musi-
 cal parody of myself. I've seen other musi-
 cians - some I know very well, and have
 worked very closely with - become that," he
 adds with a little conspiratorial chuckle. "So
 yes, I do take my work seriously - if anything
 I'll second guess myself a little too much."

Part of that reflects back on *Magic Mile*.
 While its near-on 50 tracks cover everything
 from his guitar-and-cardboard-box percus-
 sion acoustic duo work, to his repossession of
 his Saints-era electric energy with the not-so-
 cunningly-titled *Aints*, there's no way even its
 three sprawling discs can cover quite every-
 thing he has achieved. While most of the
 classics are present - the surprisingly touch-
 ing romance of *Everything I've Got Belongs To
 You*, the churning *Honey Steel's Gold*, and
 even his perhaps unexpected cover of
Highway To Hell - this churlish interviewer
 goes looking for his own favourite, and finds
Black Ticket Day not present.

Edmund is apologetic: "Isn't it? I'm sure it was
 on at least one tracklisting I did. And yes, you're
 right, if asked to put it together again tomor-
 row, it would probably be a totally different
 selection of songs. I have been called a con-
 trary bastard - there might be something to
 that." Indeed. But there are worse things to be.

WHO: Ed Kuepper

WHAT: The box set *This Is The Magic Mile*
 and the DVD *The Man, The Music,
 The Magic* (both Hot)

WHERE The Basement, Friday January 20
& WHEN: with Jeffrey Wegener and former
 Sunnyboys bassist Peter Oxley.

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