



feedback

LABJACD
BELEZA
DJ DEXTER

Beck's Music Box, Perth

09/02/2008

Saturday night was a night for firsts- not only was it the first Arts Festival concert but it was also the first night for the new Beck's Music Box and **LABJACD**'s first time performing in Perth. The Verandah vibe has been recreated with high seating, an elevated lounge and dance floor space, but there's now a capacity of 1200 and a large angular clam-shell stage. A sold-out show and a 9-piece Latin-folk-hop band is what this venue needed for an assured fun night out.

LABJACD strolled onto the stage as revellers were still gathering food and drinks, resulting in an underwhelming crowd welcome. This was quickly remedied as the brass band breaks into their trumpeting Cuban salsa, drawing a modest crowd onto the floor. Cruising into their song, *Journey*, had everyone swaying their hips to the swift air resounding through Luis Poblete's panpipes. Wedged between the Esplanade cityscape and the riverside, this was the perfect place to be experiencing such worldly culture.

As Poblete showed off his wiggity-whack rapping skills, saxophonist Andy Williamson bopped around on stage, flailing his sax in the air. Almost stealing

the show, Poblete displayed more of his many talents as he incited a Latin-flavoured jamboree with intense strumming on his charango. Amping up the crowd interaction was deckman Alfie Vielma, commanding "When I say LAB, you say JACD!" and stress-testing the new Music Box dancefloor as everyone moshed to the beat of *Mi Gente*. Not even close to satiating the crowd, Vielma twice offered to play "One more song?" as the band dutifully answered the audience's wishes to dance through the night. **LABJACD** had flown everyone around the world in 80 minutes.

Soon after, a mini-carnivale spawned within the crowd as 7-piece group **Beleza** pounded on Brazilian drums, complete with their own belly-dancing queen. The circle of samba collapsed as revellers began to out-dance each other within the group. Leading off with a conga line away from the dancefloor and leading into DJ Dexter's world music mix-up, this night was an exquisite example of how 'international' the Perth International Arts Festival will be.

ANTHONY TRAN

