

HOME

JOHN
HYATT



ROCK ART (SAT 4 FEB - WED 29 MAR 2017)



ARTIST. MUSICIAN. SCIENTIST. PUNK PROFESSOR.



INTRO

Roll up, roll up! Enter at your peril and privilege, the post-punk world of John Hyatt. Is he a professor? An artist? A musician? Could he be deemed a scientist? Or perhaps, at very least, a magician, a maker and a motivator? Is he immortal? I'm honoured to be the curator of such an irrepressible and influential force, not to mention a career that has spanned over four decades and a genuine original collaborator-innovator.

The international world of contemporary visual art rarely knows how to deal with such an interlocutor, in turn they are celebrated, feared, rejected and revered. John Hyatt demonstrates how to deal with this, through his examination of the alter ego and the act of self-representation. As one third of the infamous 1980s post-punk band, The Three Johns, in a nutshell, he would know.

Rock Art is a challenge, an exploration, a voyage into our increasingly unstable and challenging relationships to everything. Everything, I hear you say?! Step inside for a comic book collection, Hyatt-tea, a purpose-built nightclub, a large Trojan horse and much, much more. Join us for weekly live events with a gaggle of intergalactic guests brought together by John.

Welcome to the contemporary visual art exhibition-fusion-festival that is Rock Art, and do exit through the gift shop if you please.

Sarah Perks

Curator and HOME Artistic Director: Visual Art



What are fishes' ears like?

Whirligig on top of the



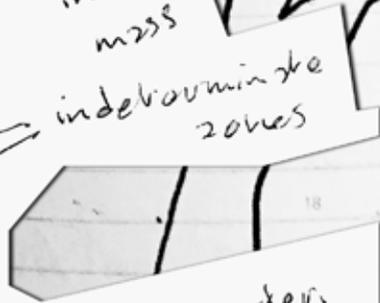
expanding universe. expands to chaotic zone.

random gravity, heat time

randomly oscillating singularity at infinity at mass

indeterminate zones

time is an expression of scalar expansion - a by-product.



scale of order.

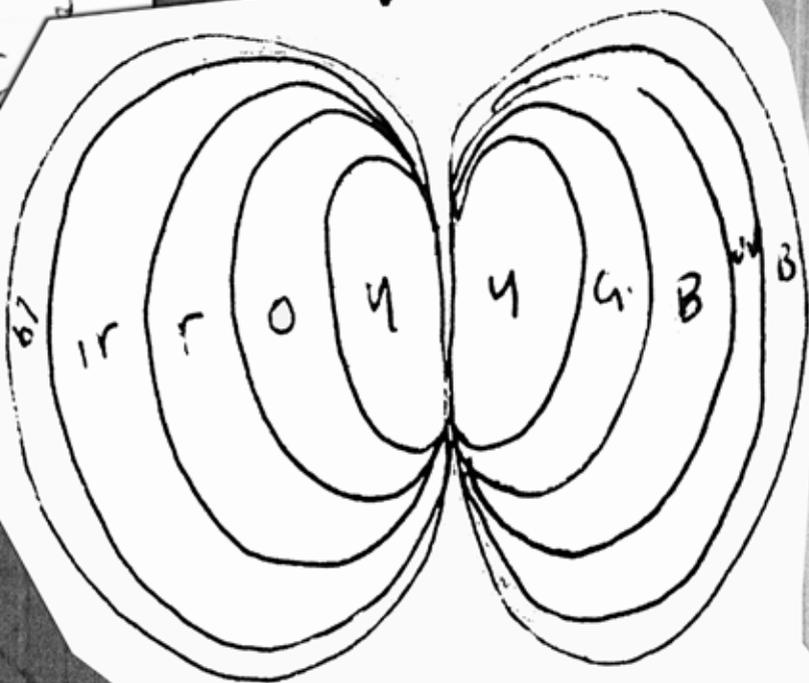
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9:00 a.m.
17 December 1999.

What is a
starfish?

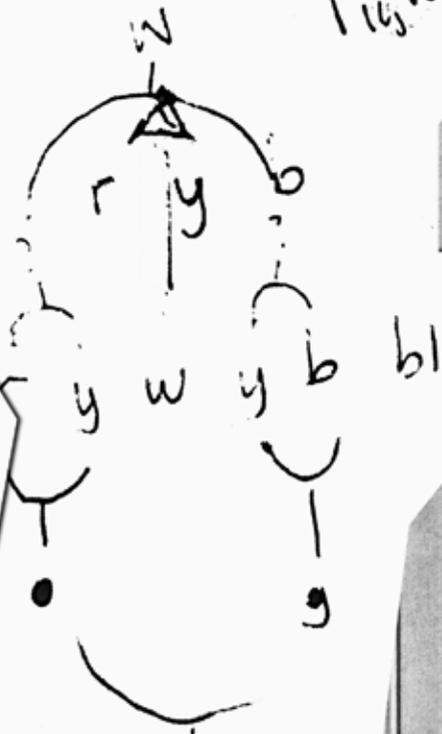
Where
my

white



22 sun

light



John Hyatt

The Interview

John Hyatt talks to journalist and broadcaster Helen Nugent about the creation of his exhibition *Rock Art*.



"It's the idea that you get a solo show and you give it away."

These are the words of John Hyatt, artist, musician, author, teacher, punk and scientist. A self-confessed optimist, he has imbued his new exhibition at HOME with a tantalising combination of individualist art practice and collaborative endeavour. Put simply, his intention is to demonstrate a new way of working.

"It feels like I'm at the centre of a web of connections, which is what it was supposed to be," he says. "It does feel like there's all these threads vibrating out."

After more than 18 months in development, Hyatt's show - *Rock Art* - has finally come to fruition. So, what can people expect to see as they weave their way round the exhibition?

"They'll progress through an orgy of ego towards an area of distributed collective making," Hyatt explains. "They'll go through the shop, then through an area of big works in the space and, at the end, which is usually a semi-circle, I'm making that into a full circle and it will be a pop-up club called Club Big. Inside there will

be the area of collective creativity. So it will move from singular artist activity to collective."

He adds: "For this show, I've tried to bring all the aspects of my life together. In the past, it used to be that I was in a band and I used to be an artist, but the two didn't mix. And when I was made a Professor at Manchester Metropolitan University, back in 1994, the art world couldn't sanction an artist being a Professor. So I went from getting lots of invitations to do exhibitions to suddenly getting none. But now I think that has changed. What I'm trying to do is bring the artist, the musician, the pedagogue and all the other 'me's together finally in order to give them away again."

In this vein, visitors to HOME will initially be presented with a series of solo works by Hyatt, including *The First Great Deception* and *The Collection and Reading Room*, the latter featuring a limited edition of Hyatt as a blend of tea. There is also the *Rock Shop*, a riot of merchandise based on his life and work.

However, Hyatt says that this part of the exhibition should not be viewed as a trip down memory lane.

"It's not a retrospective in the sense that it's not a history of past works. But it is a reflection on a long career as an artist and a musician. So it's reflecting upon an individualist art practice as John Hyatt and asking what should art be and what should an artist be in the future. It's asking the question, what's changed? In various aspects I refer back to various incarnations of John Hyatt."

After passing through these areas of personal objects and narratives, the focus shifts to Club Big, a pop-up music club, debating chamber and live art space. Throughout the course of exhibition, Friday evenings will be dedicated to this diverse display of talent, featuring, among others, Jon Langford with Barkley McKay, Rosie Garland, Tom Hyatt with Maya McCourt and a performance by Hyatt's band, The Three Johns.

Hyatt explains how it will work.

"In the space of Club Big, there will be a series of, for want of a better word, acts. It might be musical, it might be a lecture, it might be a live art performance, it might be spoken word. That will be from six until nine on Friday nights and I will be the compere. There will be a bar, a stage, a Club Big band that will play between acts, there will be a hostess. They will be either people I've worked with or people I'm impressed with what they do."

But the people on stage aren't the only element of collaboration in this unique space.

"For the art that's going to be on the walls, I've worked with the second year fine art students from three art schools - MMU, Liverpool John Moores University and Salford University. I think this is the first time that a project has been co-ordinated across all three. And under the umbrella of Northern Flowerpowerhouse, with artists and lecturer colleagues at the art schools (especially Mike-Chavez Dawson, Magnus Quaife and David Hancock -

themselves past tutees of mine) we've devised a way of working across those institutions on a project I've set, where the students invent an alter ego artist and they make the work of the alter ego artist. Maybe three students might be one artist or one student might be three artists. The work of those alter ego artists will be the work that's shown in Club Big because I've got a long personal history of working as alter ego artists and I've had quite a long experience of working with other people as an artist."

While Club Big has been generated from Hyatt's imagination, the name derives from a real venue.

"During the miners' strike, The Three Johns played miners' benefits every night of the week. The furthest afield we played was Club Big in Milan. They had all the footage of the Battle of Orgreave - a violent confrontation in 1984 between police and pickets at a coking plant in Orgreave, South Yorkshire - which you didn't see in this country and that was the first time I saw the footage. Ironically, I also remember Club Big because we were playing the gig and at one point all the sound levels went crazy. I looked over to the left and the on-stage sound mixing guy was having a punch up with the security guard and he was falling all over the sound desk. Then the security guard handcuffed the guy to the stair rail where he couldn't reach the sound desk. And so Club Big always stayed with me. I wanted a device to comment back on that history and also to enable the collective participation."

Rock Art is Hyatt's first show at HOME but he has a long history with Manchester's Cornerhouse. In fact, this Wolverhampton-born artist, who has spent all of his adult life in Yorkshire and then the North West, was part of Cornerhouse's first show back in 1986. Rather appropriately, it was called Connections, a theme which wends its way through his 2017 exhibition.

"It's taking the idea of music and being in a band, which I have been in since I was 14, and taking that paradigm of working collaboratively with others and applying it to art practice. It's music as the paradigm for the way in which we

as humans need to work together for the future, for the future of the planet and the future of humanity on the planet. In grandiose terms, it's about the need for humanity to move beyond an ego-driven existence."

He adds: "It's something I've been thinking about for a while in the sense that I've been thinking about how new technology is altering us but often in ways that are not altogether attractive to people."

This idea of transmutation is key to Hyatt's thinking, particularly when it comes to the name of the show.

"It was never musical in the first instance. Rock Art is to do with cave painting, cave art. I'm saying that humanity is just at the beginning. And I think this time will be looked back on as a moment of transition in the same way that we look back on rock art."

At the heart of Hyatt's intention, though, is discovering what the exhibition has done for other people, not least the students. "The highlights of the show for me are to see people working together and being inspired by each other."

Looking to the future is clearly part of Hyatt's DNA, not least because a life-changing event made him re-evaluate his own path. After a quarter of a century in Manchester, first as Head of Department of Fine Arts at MMU and later as director of MIRIAD (Manchester Institute for Research and Innovation in Art and Design), throat cancer forced him to take a year off and reassess. Hyatt chose to grab life by the horns. He recently moved to Liverpool to assume a new role as Professor of Contemporary Art and Director of ART Labs at Liverpool School of Art and Design, a decision he celebrates.

As the interview draws to close, I ask Hyatt if he hopes for an afterlife for Rock Art. His reply is a fitting commentary on the exhibition, his life and his future.

"It's a bit like throwing a stone in a pool and watching the ripples. But that's true of anything you do."

Interview by Helen Nugent

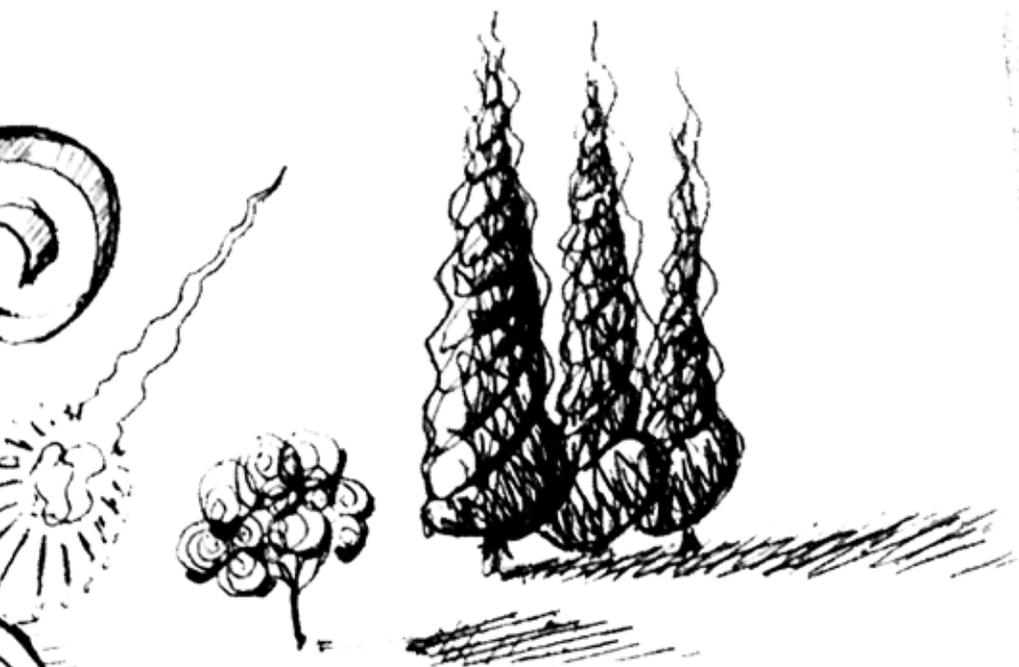


The rotation curve of galaxies is relatively flat





gravity is the
variance between light t



drukness.

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THE COLLECTION AND READING ROOM, 2017

Artist's collection of comic books,
artist's display of stones of power,
John Hyatt as tea.

A purpose-built library contains John Hyatt's collection of comic books, numbering in the thousands. John started his collection when comics first hit the shelves in the UK. He became an avid collector and attempted to follow them all. As comics gained in popularity and the range of titles increased rapidly, the possibility of maintaining a comprehensive collection became an impossible ambition. Visitors can browse the titles on the shelves, sign one out, and read it in the sitting area outside the library. There, a specially blended John Hyatt tea can also be enjoyed - blended by Mike Chavez-Dawson.

Surrounding the library are shelves containing a display of rocks and stones. Seemingly worthless items, they all have special meanings from being noticed and picked up. John always carries a stone in his pocket.

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THE GREAT DECEPTION, 2017

MDF, timber, mirrors, audio.

The first great deception may well have been the ancient Greeks' 'gift' to the Trojans, leading to the final defeat of the city they had laid siege to for ten years. We have recreated the Trojan horse! This time it resembles an equine mirror-ball with a glimmering mirror mosaic surface. However not all is as it seems... Voices emanate from within, reciting instructions to travel to another dimension. Does the horse contain a magician or mystic? Is it a doorway to another world? Who will climb out of it?

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CLUB BIG, 2017

Functioning club space, eight club nights, exhibition of artwork by students from the University of Salford, Liverpool John Moores University and Manchester Metropolitan University.

Rock Art draws on John's collaborations old and new and the biggest collaborative venture in the exhibition is Club Big, a fully kitted out club space that takes up half of the gallery. Exciting bands, soloists, performers and spectacles play each Friday night during the run of the exhibition and all events are free to attend. Please turn to the back cover to see the full line up.

The inaugural night will feature a rare performance by The Three Johns, John Hyatt's post-punk band who gained a dedicated following through the 1980s. Again, not all performers are as they seem, as various alter-egos use the stage to explore identity and personal transformation.

Club Big also exhibits work by art students from the University of Salford, Liverpool John Moores University and Manchester Metropolitan University. The first three-way initiative of its kind, the students have been briefed to respond to the subject of alter-egos.

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THE ANTICIPATION, 2017

Digital prints of scanned and composed posters, rope barrier

Leading up to the Club Big entrance, audience members attending the Friday-night club nights will file in past a rope barrier and three massive banners, carrying montages created by John. The social activity of waiting and anticipating the evening's event has been turned into an artwork, activated every Friday.

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BRAINBOX, 2017

Two channel video with audio

A dual video. On the right-hand screen a version of the artist as an academic dances backwards and forwards across the border between art and science while discussing how the human brain functions and how it creates meaning. While on the screen to the left, sand forms beautiful undulating sculptural time forms. For a number of years, John has been creating experiments by laying sand on a smooth surface and sending sound waves through it at localised points. By changing the frequencies, the patterns transform dramatically in spectral and amorphous shapes.

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THREE WISHES, 2017

Three channel video

Three new edits of previous footage have been compiled by the artist. The world's first waveform cymatic poetry (a literary form invented by John) shifts across the screen as printed words are placed on a surface that has sound waves of different frequencies passed through it. On another, the artists face appears and disappears, while projections of sound-activated sand forms are cast across his face. The human form given substance by the physical laws underpinning the mutations and accidents of nature. On the third, footage of the Peak District reveals a landscape similarly

morphing over time, and shaped by the same laws, but over a duration that is imperceptible to the human eye.

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ROCK SHOP, 2017

Functioning shop, exhibition merchandise

Like all great exhibitions, there is a dedicated gift shop. Located directly outside the gallery entrance, the existing HOME shop has been expanded to stretch across the foyer, stocked with merchandise carrying sketches from the hundreds of notebooks that John has filled over the years, alongside CDs and books from his many and varied guises as musician, academic, and writer.

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ROCK ART: QUICKSILVER, 2017

Audio CD

The album, Rock Art: Quicksilver, has been specially created for this exhibition, demonstrating the power of working together on collaborations where music is the artform. The tracks on this CD explore the themes of the exhibition in the form of music and lyrics, including the first new material by The Three Johns since 1990. The CD can be listened to in The Reading Room and can be purchased in the Rock Shop.

Beast



The Fisher



John L
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EARTH



MAKE YOUR
SELF
BIGGER



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imagination
ONE IS ALL
ALL IS
ONE.

gaze back to the sub-atomic,
it be random and a particle
interface with our gaze at my
point.



BE THE HEART OF HOME.
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FRIENDS help us to produce thrilling new art and keep our galleries free to all. We can't do it without you. Become a Friend from £7.50 a month.

Pick up a flyer, talk to a member of the HOME team or visit homemcr.org/friends

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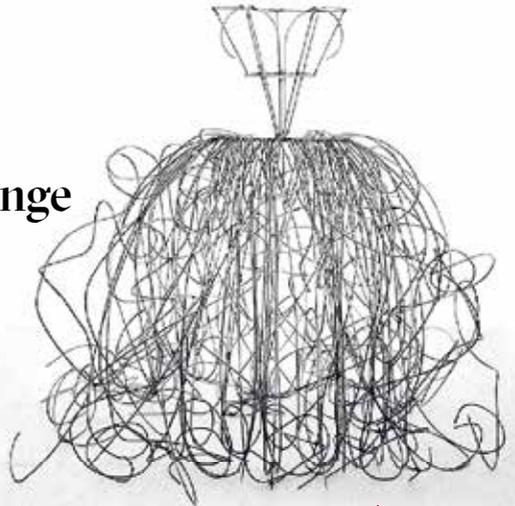
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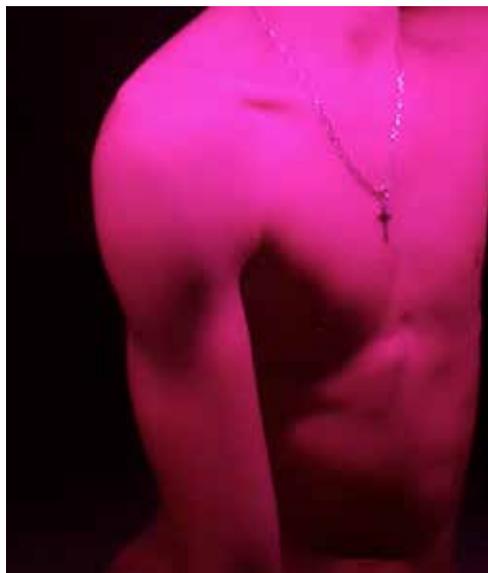
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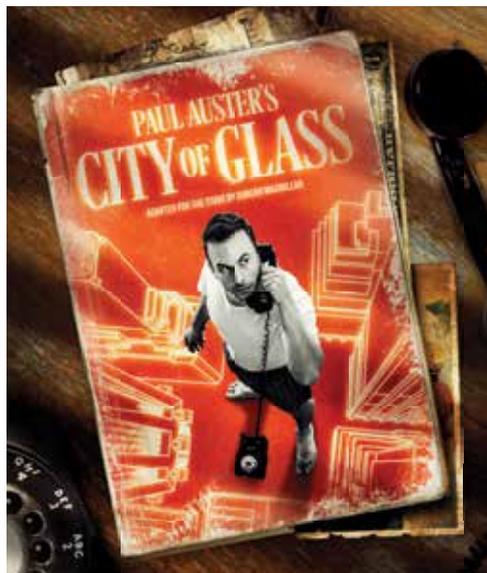
Curated by Sarah Perks

This pioneering contemporary visual art group exhibition takes the artistic and socio-cultural movement La movida (literally "the movement") of post-Franco Spain as its thematic heart.

homemcr.org/la-movida

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homemcr.org/city-of-glass

THANK YOU

Thank you to Sarah Perks for her subtle but purposeful direction of my creative flow. The production team at HOME, especially the wonderful Tomas Harold, for realising visions. Gary Andrew Clarke and Alex Bond for surmounting the graphic difficulties I set them. Also, the multitude of creative collaborators too numerous to mention but I hope recognised throughout. I would especially like to honour the students of the Northern Flowerpowerhouse consortium of LJMU, MMU and Salford Universities. Our future is safe with them: Tom Doubtfire, Tara Bowles, Samantha Evans, Sally Slingsby, Drilon Islami, Callum Morley, Anna Zygler, Abbie Bradshaw, Kimberley Seymour, Christian Nerf, Omar Javed, Jamie Kirk, Abigail Evans, Anne Lister, Evan Parkes, Ellen Moss, Jack Finch, Jacob Lea, Jasmine Jones, Jessica Bewell, Elizabeth Abbot, Eye Suriyanon, Lizzie Abbot, Ovie Kings, Abdul Yussuff, Sor Casino, Helena Oliveira, Cait Sparks, Alicia Mrozowska, Ieva Sedova, Natalie Longworthy, Melissa Dolan, Robyn Parr, Jacob Lyne, Caitlin Mooney, Kirsten Reed, Zane Queijo, and Angelika Denis. Along with their curator, Mike Chavez-Dawson and tutors Magnus Quaipe, Rory Macbeth and David Hancock.



But, above all, I would especially wish to thank Liz Hyatt who lightly clubbed me over the head and dragged me into a cave 30 years ago and has been my rock ever since.

With special mention too, to the Technical Team at HOME, and to Simon Bland and Daniel Mills for their kind assistance in sourcing acts for Club Big.

- John Hyatt

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CLUB

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Expect folk to electronica, punk to spoken word, comedy to live hypnotism, alongside the supernatural and the bizarre, at Manchester's most bold and adventurous new venue.

Join John Hyatt, (one third of legendary post-punk band The Three Johns) as he introduces the best breakthrough live music and performance in our free pop up music venue, Club Big, every Friday from Fri 3 Feb - Fri 17 Mar, 18:00 - 21:00.

homemcr.org/club-big
homemcr.org/john-hyatt

Fri 3 Feb

Jon Langford with Barkley McKay
Rosie Garland
Tom Hyatt
The Three Johns
(Exhibition Preview)

Fri 10 Feb

Danielle Swindells
Nathan Jones
Ruby Tingle

Fri 17 Feb

The Norman Clayture Experience
Laura James & The Lyres
Rosie Garland

Fri 24 Feb

Robin Nature Bold with Simon
Woolham
Inland Taipan
Theatre of Nothing

Fri 3 Mar

Murmurists
Chaotic Friends
Najia Bagi

Fri 10 Mar

Andrew Crompton
Rasheesh Krishna
SPIRIT:level

Fri 17 Mar

SuhailK
Nancy Elizabeth
Elizabeth Preston

Club Big is part of John Hyatt:
Rock Art, a new exhibition at
HOME, which runs Sat 4 Feb -
Wed 29 Mar.