

# REVIEWS

## CUZ WE DON'T DO *PRE-VIEWS*

### CONCERT

## GROWN-UP SHAMBLES

MÖTORHEAD /// PRIMAVERA SOUND '06

BY *Andrew Minh*

The Stones cancelled their Barcelona gig after Keith Richards fell out of a coconut tree, but no such pussyfooting for the legendary *Motörhead*. In his first concert since his sixtieth birthday, lead singer, bass player and perennial member of Motörhead Lemmy Kilmister still has what it takes to work the crowd into a frenzy. No fancy pyrotechnics, no giant video screens, no ingratiating loops or samples like Jagger and friends - just balls to the wall "rock 'n' fuckin roll".

Chin cocked, rasping into a mic positioned slightly above head level, Lemmy was backed by a Spinal Tap-worthy wall of Marshall amps. Fellow 'heads included Mikkey Dee on drums, and Philip Campbell on guitar (probably the longest standing member next to Lemmy). After ripping into unsuspecting alterna-rockers with *Gangrene*, Lemmy lead the trio into familiar tunes — and some not-so-familiar ones from their latest album, *Inferno*.

"Is it loud enough?" sneered Lemmy at least two times to a mostly uncomprehending audience. Then, about midway through the set things picked up.

Signs of the devil, chants of "Mot-ohr-hed!, Mot-ohr-hed!" set the Forum quaking. This band isn't about the latest fad, unlike most aging rockers who have found it necessary to adapt to youthful frivolities. They play rock - dirty rock - with punk intensity. It's frayed at the edges, hardly refined... buzztoned guitars, double-bass-peddle thumping madness blasted out with relentless momentum.

This is just about the only group of grown-up misfits who could get away with a song called *Over the Top* and dedicate it to "you ... and me", followed by a shout of "Viva la España [sic]" while a *senyera* is being waved near the foot of the stage. Pretensions have they not. The encore started with a so-so acoustic number called *Whorehouse Blues* - ol' Lemmy getting sentimental - then launched into the heavy metal classic *Ace of Spades*. No, that wasn't the sea misting the crowd; that was beer coming from flying cans of Estrella. 30 years on and they're still the band that'll "make your lawn die if they move next door".

### CD

## ONEPERCENTRES

PLATINUM BUNDLE

BY *Domenico Composto*

"Was it necessary in cause? That my need to curve that you were concerned? Having felt that you are painful so much. If you sent some signals to me at least?" No, this is not some cryptic transmission made from Earth to an alien mother ship. These are lyrics to a tune called *Share* by the Japanese (we-sing-in-English) punk band, Onepercentres. As expected — and regardless of Osamu Seino's (lead singer) great-but-failed efforts to craft perfect English lyrics from his deep *nihongo* love poetry — plenty was lost in the translation process. So you may find yourself puzzled as you listen and try to understand what songs like *Air Head* and *Ignorance of the World* are about.

Don't pick the album up if you're looking for something cerebral in the lyrics department. But the music is top-grade Nippon punk, and although the album does no justice to what these guys are like live (because they fucking kick it live) the 14 tracks are well-done because these guys know how to keep each song interesting. You won't hear tunes begin and end with the same double forte dynamic or driving 2 & 4 snare smacks, instead you'll hear musicality at its punk best when the Onepercentres take a fast-paced track like *Take Me Up* into half-time for split seconds during the verses; or songs like *The Stage of Ennui* that start thick and guitar heavy, and lighten up so you can actually hear back-up vocalist and bassist Yumi harmonize with Osamu during the verses. In terms of band sound some of the tracks remind me a bit of Smashing Pumpkins, but there is something unique at play — and if these guys can last long enough to release a couple more albums you can bet that their sound and style will have finally been solidified.

### BOOK

## THE DOUBLE

JOSÉ SARAMAGO /// THE HARVIL PRESS /// 2004

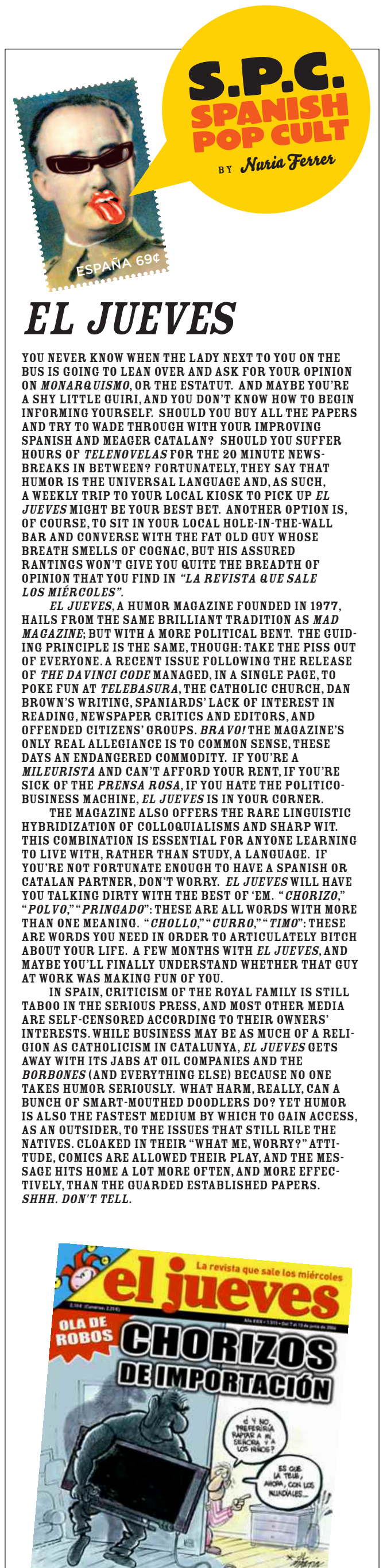
BY *Lara Duke*

You know those throwaway films you passively sit through and forget completely the morning after? One quiet evening our central character — the awkwardly named Tertuliano Máximo Afonso — watches such a film and then goes to bed, unimpressed and absolutely unmoved. But he wakes up in the middle of the night, inexplicably drawn to the TV screen to make the uncanny realisation that one of the bit-part actors is his exact physical double. This strange and unsettling discovery slowly begins to infiltrate every aspect of his day-to-day life.

Nobel Prize-winning author José Saramago chooses this doppelganger motif to explore the nature of identity and to study extreme behaviour in extreme situations. Just what would you do if you made the uncanny discovery that your physical double was alive and well and living in the same town? Tertuliano Máximo Afonso, a mild mannered, middle-aged and divorced history teacher - currently suffering from depression and general lethargy — begins to make some preliminary enquiries. But the closer he gets to his doppelganger, the further he is

drawn into this dark enigma. He keeps it secret from his girlfriend, mother and the few other social contacts he maintains, and begins to neglect his normal life in his mission to solve his strange predicament that results in a feverish battle of wits, power and presence.

Although written in the third person, Saramago provides us with lengthy personal dialogues in which the protagonist intricately questions his every step — aware that contact and association with his dead ringer will lead him further into the unknown, the bizarre and the unanswerable. The plot is fascinating, although the treatment is at times heavy going. This is in part due to Saramago's adversity to punctuation — there is a notable absence of speech marks, question marks and even full stops, leading to some marathon sentences that you can get truly lost in. This is perhaps a device to emerge the reader in the confused mind of the novel's protagonist, but it proves quiet excessive at times. Nevertheless, *The Double* is a powerful exploration of essential questions and an interesting study into the nature of identity in our current age.



**S.P.C. SPANISH POP CULT**  
BY *Nuria Ferrer*

## EL JUEVES

YOU NEVER KNOW WHEN THE LADY NEXT TO YOU ON THE BUS IS GOING TO LEAN OVER AND ASK FOR YOUR OPINION ON *MONARQUISMO*, OR THE *ESTATUT*. AND MAYBE YOU'RE A SHY LITTLE GUIRI, AND YOU DON'T KNOW HOW TO BEGIN INFORMING YOURSELF. SHOULD YOU BUY ALL THE PAPERS AND TRY TO WADE THROUGH WITH YOUR IMPROVING SPANISH AND MEAGER CATALAN? SHOULD YOU SUFFER HOURS OF *TELENOVELAS* FOR THE 20 MINUTE NEWS-BREAKS IN BETWEEN? FORTUNATELY, THEY SAY THAT HUMOR IS THE UNIVERSAL LANGUAGE AND, AS SUCH, A WEEKLY TRIP TO YOUR LOCAL KIOSK TO PICK UP *EL JUEVES* MIGHT BE YOUR BEST BET. ANOTHER OPTION IS, OF COURSE, TO SIT IN YOUR LOCAL HOLE-IN-THE-WALL BAR AND CONVERSE WITH THE FAT OLD GUY WHOSE BREATH SMELLS OF COGNAC, BUT HIS ASSURED RANTINGS WON'T GIVE YOU QUITE THE BREADTH OF OPINION THAT YOU FIND IN "LA REVISTA QUE SALE LOS MIÉRCOLES".

*EL JUEVES*, A HUMOR MAGAZINE FOUNDED IN 1977, HAILS FROM THE SAME BRILLIANT TRADITION AS *MAD MAGAZINE*, BUT WITH A MORE POLITICAL BENT. THE GUIDING PRINCIPLE IS THE SAME, THOUGH: TAKE THE PISS OUT OF EVERYONE. A RECENT ISSUE FOLLOWING THE RELEASE OF *THE DAVINCI CODE* MANAGED, IN A SINGLE PAGE, TO POKE FUN AT *TELEBASURA*, THE CATHOLIC CHURCH, DAN BROWN'S WRITING, SPANIARDS' LACK OF INTEREST IN READING, NEWSPAPER CRITICS AND EDITORS, AND OFFENDED CITIZENS' GROUPS. BRAVO! THE MAGAZINE'S ONLY REAL ALLEGIANCE IS TO COMMON SENSE, THESE DAYS AN ENDANGERED COMMODITY. IF YOU'RE A *MILEURISTA* AND CAN'T AFFORD YOUR RENT, IF YOU'RE SICK OF THE *PRENSA ROSA*, IF YOU HATE THE POLITICO-BUSINESS MACHINE, *EL JUEVES* IS IN YOUR CORNER.

THE MAGAZINE ALSO OFFERS THE RARE LINGUISTIC HYBRIDIZATION OF COLLOQUIALISMS AND SHARP WIT. THIS COMBINATION IS ESSENTIAL FOR ANYONE LEARNING TO LIVE WITH, RATHER THAN STUDY, A LANGUAGE. IF YOU'RE NOT FORTUNATE ENOUGH TO HAVE A SPANISH OR CATALAN PARTNER, DON'T WORRY. *EL JUEVES* WILL HAVE YOU TALKING DIRTY WITH THE BEST OF 'EM. "CHORIZO," "POLVO," "PRINGADO": THESE ARE ALL WORDS WITH MORE THAN ONE MEANING. "CHOLLO," "CURRO," "TIMO": THESE ARE WORDS YOU NEED IN ORDER TO ARTICULATEDLY BITCH ABOUT YOUR LIFE. A FEW MONTHS WITH *EL JUEVES*, AND MAYBE YOU'LL FINALLY UNDERSTAND WHETHER THAT GUY AT WORK WAS MAKING FUN OF YOU.

IN SPAIN, CRITICISM OF THE ROYAL FAMILY IS STILL TABOO IN THE SERIOUS PRESS, AND MOST OTHER MEDIA ARE SELF-CENSORED ACCORDING TO THEIR OWNERS' INTERESTS. WHILE BUSINESS MAY BE AS MUCH OF A RELIGION AS CATHOLICISM IN CATALUNYA, *EL JUEVES* GETS AWAY WITH ITS JABS AT OIL COMPANIES AND THE *BORBONES* (AND EVERYTHING ELSE) BECAUSE NO ONE TAKES HUMOR SERIOUSLY. WHAT HARM, REALLY, CAN A BUNCH OF SMART-MOUTHED DOODLERS DO? YET HUMOR IS ALSO THE FASTEST MEDIUM BY WHICH TO GAIN ACCESS, AS AN OUTSIDER, TO THE ISSUES THAT STILL RILE THE NATIVES. CLOAKED IN THEIR "WHAT ME, WORRY?" ATTITUDE, COMICS ARE ALLOWED THEIR PLAY, AND THE MESSAGE HITS HOME A LOT MORE OFTEN, AND MORE EFFECTIVELY, THAN THE GUARDED ESTABLISHED PAPERS. SHHH. DON'T TELL.

