

## Jazz

### Jools Holland

Albert Hall, SW7

★★★★☆

The sweetest moment in Jools Holland's concert came towards the end as the years fell away and Sandie Shaw, barefoot and long-legged, emerged from the wings. Lured back on to the road by Holland and his big band, the Sixties star — now 64 and a respected psychotherapist — seemed to be having no end of fun as she plunged into *(There's) Always Something There to Remind Me*. Jimmy Savile may no longer be with us, but Shaw can still summon memories of yе olde Carnaby Street.

*Puppet on a String* had changed a bit though. Recast in a minor key, the song sounded shadowy and sinister, as if David Lynch had re-edited it as an Ute Lemper video. The Eurovision jury wouldn't have approved, but it worked none the less: Shaw's voice has grown darker, and in any case those bubblegum lyrics have always had an aftertaste of bitter almonds.

Holland had been astutely shuffling the pack all evening. He is so ubiquitous a figure that we take him for granted, yet we owe him a debt of gratitude for keeping the showband tradition alive. Boogie-woogie piano riffs gave way to gospel, R&B and swing, and another guest, his old friend Chris Difford, was on hand with Seventies nostalgia in the sprightly form of the Squeeze anthem *Cool for Cats*.

The orchestra is anything but a museum piece. The sound mix may have been dismayingly shrill, and Holland's boyish voice is always going to be an acquired taste, but there were some full-blooded solos from a horn section that included the saxophonist Derek Nash. Rico Rodriguez, the grand old man, is still around to blow a brief trombone solo and regale audiences with his ska vocals.

The German singer-actor Herbert Grönemeyer — best known to British audiences as the reporter in Wolfgang Peterson's classic U-Boat film *Das Boot* — added a touch of the young Joe Cocker to the proceedings and Louise Marshall was as soulful as ever. As for the long-serving Ruby Turner, her Aretha-meets-Mahalia vocals grow more majestic with each passing year.

#### Clive Davis

AECC, Aberdeen, Thu; SECC, Glasgow, Fri and Sat; City Hall, Sheffield, Sun; Guildhall, Portsmouth, Dec 8; Pavilions, Plymouth, Dec 9; Brighton Centre, Dec 10. Details: [joolsholland.com](http://joolsholland.com)