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Tune-up brings a taste of urban folk to Mad Hatters

THE Scottish Arts Council's Tune-Up tour has enabled Highland audiences to hear acts as diverse as Italian jazz drummer Paolo Vinaccia and the desert blues of Mali's Tinariwen, but Thursday's Mad Hatters visitors De Rosa come from a lot nearer home.

Hailing from Lanarkshire, as is easily spotted from Martin Henry's distinctively West Coast vocals and the local references in his lyrics, De Rosa are on tour to promote new album "Prevention".

The new album featured guest performances from Life Without Buildings' Robert Johnson and Mogwai's Barry



Burns, who has no qualms about declaring himself a De Rosa fan.

"I seriously count it as one of the biggest honours of my career to have been asked to play some piano on this sublime recording," he stated.

De Rosa's other mem-

bers are brothers James and Neil Woodside on bass and drums respectively, with Chris Connick on guitar and Andrew Bush on piano/keyboards.

Doors open for the Mad Hatters show (upstairs at Hootananny's Ceilidh Bar), at 9pm.

The Metro
27 March 2009
(35)

Gig De Rosa

With the populace primed for brittle, Scottish-accented alt.pop by the likes of Frightened Rabbit and Broken Records, timing couldn't be better for the return of Lanarkshire's De Rosa.

It's been three years since debut album *Mend*, but its compelling, dusky melodies and piquant lyricism were so memorable that it feels much longer. Attracting an avalanche of praise, *Mend* was such a definitive statement it was almost certain the follow-up would disappoint.

Recently released, like *Mend*, on the Chemikal Underground label, *Prevention* isn't just a worthy successor: it's something of a quiet revelation. If *Mend* was serrated and dangerously precarious, like a drawer of knives tumbling down steps, *Prevention* is a tin of dress-making pins; glistening and delicate, but still with the potential to wound.

With the occasional synthesised bleep and drum machine swish allied to spindly guitars and contemplative piano figures – courtesy of Mogwai's Barry Burns – De Rosa's newly extended musical palette essentially



acts as a restrained, seamlessly crafted accompaniment to the quivering, sour vocals of Martin John Henry. Tender, menacing and cerebral, his lyrics have grown so much it's almost alarming.

With artwork by Scots cultural giant Alasdair Gray, *Prevention* is an album that surely assures Henry's aim of 'in some small way, giving post-industrial Lanarkshire a place in culture'.

Nadine McBay

Tomorrow, Sneaky Pete's, 73 Cowgate, Edinburgh, 7pm, £5. Tel: 0870 060 0100. www.wearederosa.com