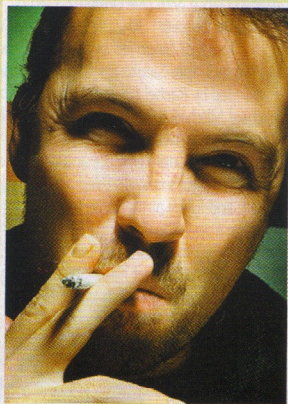


Review Doug Stanhope

● “My comedy will never be for everyone,” understates the beer-swilling, dishevelled, famously offensive Doug Stanhope, “that’s why I gig in places like this - the stupid village of fucking Bath – places most people would rather bomb!” And so, having endeared himself with the locals, the Bill Hicks heir apparent begins his impatient cyclone, devouring tea-time small talk favourites including domestic violence, Darfur, sexual abuse, paedophilia, religion, torture and one, tour-long gag (“Is



Mum Dead Yet?") involving a loudspeaker phone call to his 90-year-old, emphysema-suffering mum (his dead dad photos are plucked from his wallet later on); it’s frenetic, virulent and lucid at times, shuffling and inconsequential at others. But beneath the liberal-baiting, apparent shock tactics (many of his subjects, under closely scrutiny, are merely mirrors for calculated swipes at other dunderheaded social ills – inept government, human irrationality, ignorance et al) lies a gem of a mind, swift to point out the inane contradictions choking the world we inhabit. An elongated sketch on the absurd furore surrounding American vice-presidential candidate Sarah Palin (whose newly born baby was prenatally diagnosed with Down’s Syndrome) sees one audience members departing in a cloud of expletives. Doug just carries on with more uncomfortable pregnancy jokes. Like the man said, not for everyone. (Joe Spurgeon)

★★★★★

DOUG STANHOPE WIDCOMBE SOCIAL CLUB, BATH, WED 10 SEPT.