



OnTheTown Catherine Foley

Shaz Oye, Julie Feeney, Declan de Barra and Michael John of rock band The Marshalls were among those who attended a party on Tuesday night to mark the launch of this year's *Hotpress Yearbook*.

Up-and-coming bands such as Autograph - comprising Paulie Daly, Elton Mullally and the enigmatically-named Coad - and some of Ham Sandwich's line-up, namely Ollie Murphy, Podge McNamee and Niamh Farrell, were also in Dublin's Sugar Club. They enjoyed music from Republic of Loose, Delorentos and Julie Feeney.

De Barra, whose first solo album, *Song of a Thousand Birds*, was released in March, will be singing at Bewleys Cafe Theatre on Thursday, June 15; at the Mayo Summer Music Series in St Michael's Church, Ballina in July; and at the Galway Arts Festival later in the summer.

"There's a lot of really strong bands coming through here and it's really important that we support them. I think it's really important that they have the information that the yearbook provides," said Niall Stokes, the book's publisher and editor.

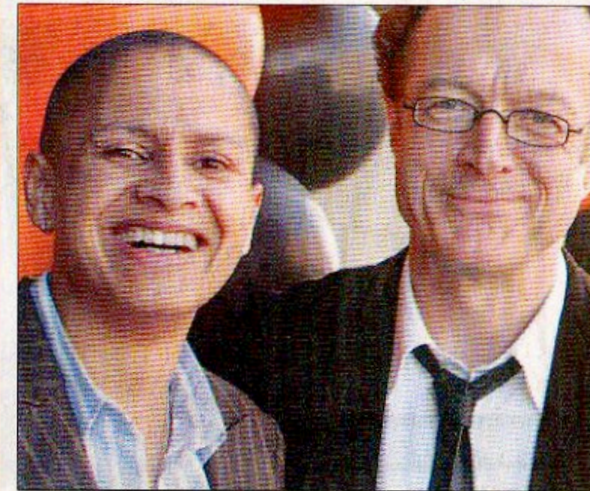
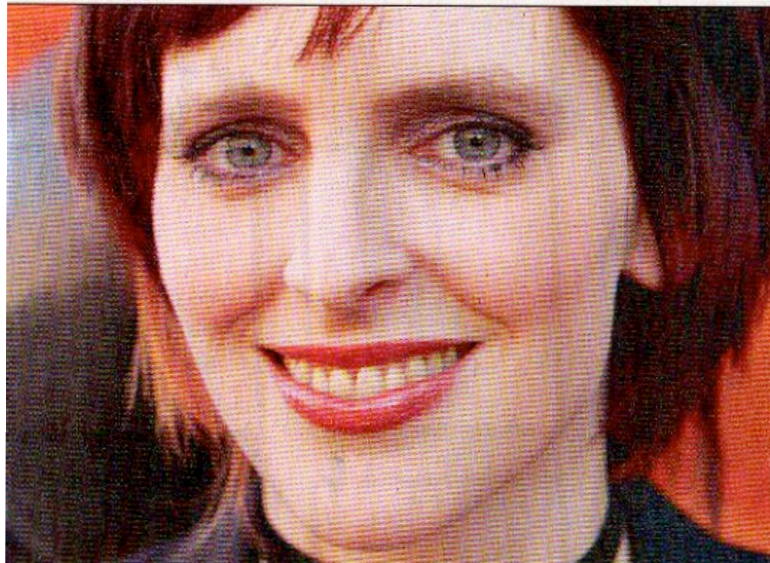
Others at the party included RTE presenter Blathnaid Ní Chofaigh, journalist Fiona Looney (whose first play *Dandelions* is returning to the Olympia Theatre in June and also playing in Cork this summer), and comedian Karl Spain, who compered the event.

"There are an amazing amount of bands in Dublin at the moment, all of them have record deals and all of them are touring in the UK," said RTE 2FM DJ Jenny Huston. "There's no shortage of talent. It's quite a hot scene," she said.

"There's a whole new crop of bands coming up. It's as healthy as it's ever been, if not more so," added Brian Adams, head of music at Today FM.

TheArts

A who's who of Irish rock



Singers Julie Feeney (left) and Shaz Oye (above left) at the launch of the *Hotpress* yearbook, edited by Niall Stokes (above right) at the Sugar Club
Photographs: Matt Kavanagh