

All Roger wants is satisfaction

By MUFF ANDERSSON

TODAY'S songs should have political themes, says singer-songwriter Roger Lucey.

"There's no way you can just ignore what's happening on your doorstep. Besides, audiences aren't prepared to sit back and eat junk anymore."

Roger, former darling of the student left, is back in South Africa complete with tiny diamond-studded earrings after "sussing out" the musical scene in England and the United States.

He was invited by Manfred Mann to audition for the Earthband in London, and wasn't accepted — or decided not to take the job — depending on whether you hear Manfred's version of the story or Roger's.

Tour

In any event, he didn't become lead vocalist for the Earthband and has just completed a stint at Johannesburg's Market Theatre with the new band he has put together.

He plans to tour 15 campuses in the country in the next few months.

"This band is going to be the best South Africa has seen — technically excellent, but real entertainment."

Roger feels it's fine to mix songs about detention and apartheid's resettlement policies with a glam-rock presentation.

"The fact that my lyrics are strong shouldn't detract from my basic function as an entertainer."

Then, he says, he wants to reach black audiences and "you can't come on in your jeans. You've got to look good. You've got a responsibility to your audience."

"It's important not to alienate people — especially not the Afrikaans people — so this sort of thing has to be done carefully with a bit of dash and humour."

What about the "Pre-Azania



ROGER LUCEY
Tunes of change

poet" tag he had before he went overseas?

"That still applies. I didn't want people to see me as a rock 'n' roll singer and "pre-Azania" has the connotation that my tunes are about a period of change, or rather of tumult before the change."

His political awareness developed when he was a schoolboy in Natal (although he only started performing in folk clubs when he left school) and "it's based on a street thing, not theoretical presumptions."

Experience

"From an early age I used to hang around Greyville and got involved in a whole different lifestyle at the same time I was going to good schools."

Later he worked for oil and gold refineries all up and down the coast.

But although his songs are political, he's not trying to change people's thinking — just cause some discussion, he stresses.

"I'm trying to entertain. I'm trying to make a crust, play music I enjoy and have others enjoy it at the same time."

What about the Big Overseas?

"I'm not interested in going overseas except to record — technically it would be good — and to get some experience."

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