

# Eclectic Light Orchestra

Limerick lounge lovelies the **Brad Pitt Light Orchestra** are playing this month | Jeff ree tunes up

The 13th of December sees the Brad Pitt Light Orchestra hit Dolan's Upstairs, capping a year which saw any number of gigs across the country and kudos pouring in from the likes of HotPress, Myles Dungan and...erm... Ryan Tubridy? Guess any publicity is good publicity.

Formed in and around U.L by three local siblings and a clutch of like-minded individuals, BPLO recently reformed in their spiritual hometown to spin their own brand of cabaret-styled musings to Limerick's mewling masses. Leg caught up with chief songwriter/ideas engine David Blake esq. to chew the polyphonic fat.

On the subject of their songwriting process, Blake is charmingly frank, but with tongue firmly in cheek: "Generally I'd be the dictator there... Occasionally a song gets past my sensors and gets made. I suppose I've just put a lot of time into it over the years and I'm relatively comfortable writing and arranging stuff. We're essentially a melodic group, that would be one of our musical strengths, and that's what I find it easy to arrange for. To make a nice sound that doesn't depart into 'difficult' jazz".

At the suggestion that he does manage to slide some noise in there, David responds that he's a big Tom Waits fan, which is very telling, particularly on tracks like 'The Devil and Me'. "It's a nice mixture of the nerdy, nice melodies and weird things like hairdryers in the background. A certain amount of experimentation yields no results, but when it lands it's lovely". One particularly nice feature of BPLO's music is harmonies so tight that you couldn't slide a rizla paper between them, never overwhelmed by the noise. "That's it. A lot of things in our music, however incongruous, that are complementing each other". Leg has suggested that BPLO are the musical equivalent of a good pint of Guinness, perfectly layered, smooth and pleasingly monochrome, which drew a chuckle of satisfaction from Blake.

More than most local bands, BPLO seem to be inherently bound to the art scene in Limerick, both through performances in the Belltable and through collaborations with local artist Ruth Crean: "Yeah, I think a lot of that is down to Ann (Blake's sister and resident chanteuse), because of her heavy involvement with Impact Theatre Co. and other theatrical outings.

As a result we've ended up getting a lot of those kinds of gigs. We played at a theatre forum last summer; we just seem to fit the bill, in that we seem to look relatively neat," he says with a faint snigger.

Looking ahead to Dolan's, and Blake is upbeat on the subject: "Well it's on the 13th, so it's kind of gonna be our Christmas gig. That should be a great one, given that we haven't played there for a while in our full capacity". An impending gig in Dalkey brings up the subject of BPLO's popularity outside of Limerick, particularly in Dublin, a popularity David attributes much of to the internet word-of-mouth.

"A few people seem to like us there alright. Again, that's another bizarre new demographic, the blogosphere. Once you have music available on the 'net, people can decide instantly whether they like you or not. There's a lot of bored people at work with headphones, and that counts for an awful lot. And the likes of those people tend to have money too, so they will come to your gigs, and maybe even buy the odd record!"

Leg has no doubt that following a great year of disarming performances, The Brad Pitt Light Orchestra will have little to worry about on that front...

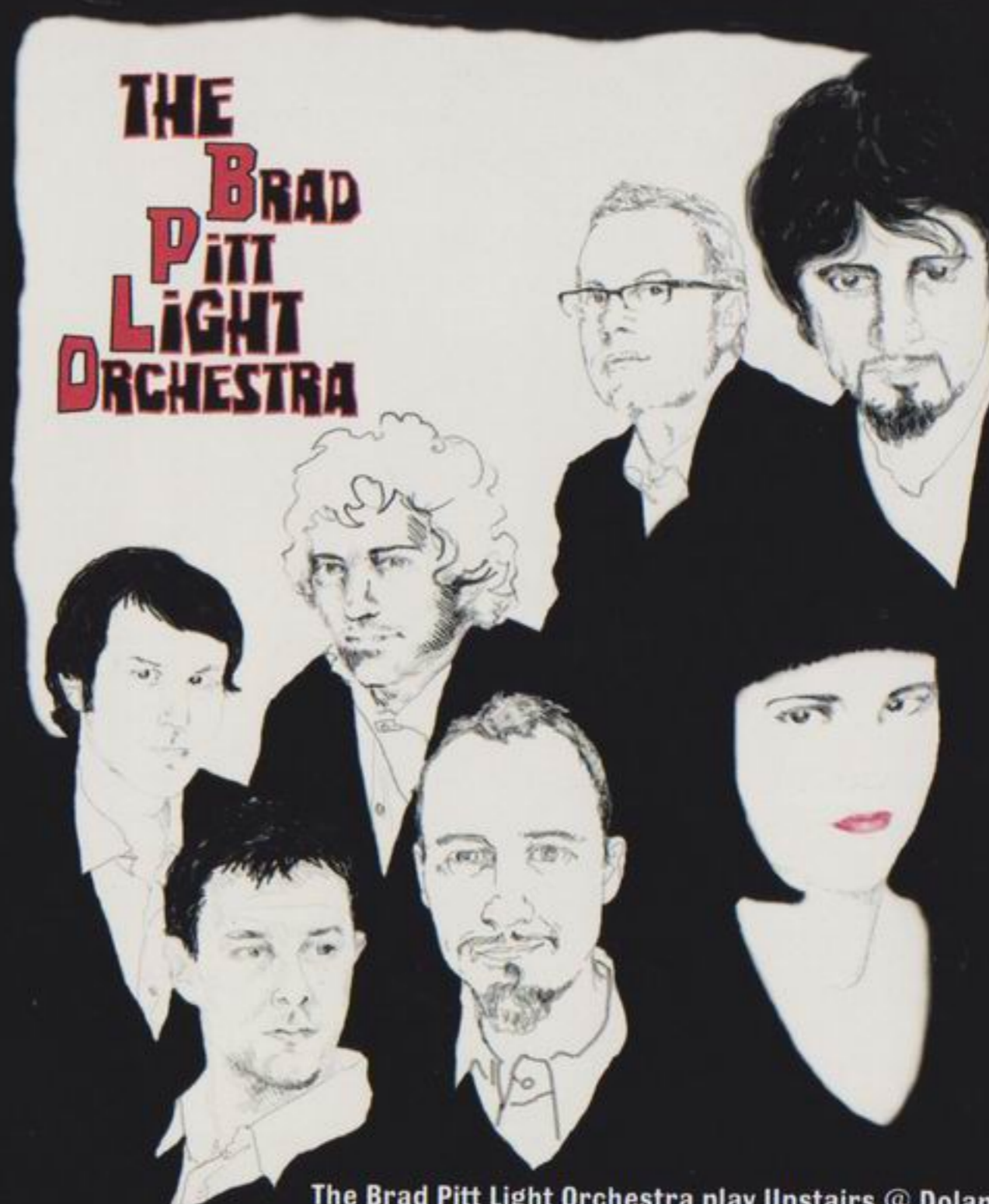


Illustration by Ruth Crean

The Brad Pitt Light Orchestra play Upstairs @ Dolan's on December 13th  
For more info call 061 314 483 or log onto dolans.ie