

**Howard and
Eberlee, at Chapter**

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A taste of live rock

By IFAN PAYNE

LAURIE Anderson, Robert Ashley and David Byrne are three of the better-known exponents of what can be termed post realism.

At their best these performers use multiple media — live, electronic and digital — to go beyond the realistic situation of a live concert and of a song within that concert, and by adding elements of surrealism and unrealism fold the experience in on itself.

All those three performers are American and it is perhaps no accident that the Eberlee half of Howard and Eberlee is American and that between them the two bring this American richness to their live rock video experience *Departure Lounge*.

Here, in the show which was performed at Chapter on Thursday evening, the visual arts, ~~opera~~ music and the performance art came together in an event that is unique, engrossing and stimulating.

To take just one example, the commercial video used to accompany *The Price of Love* is already well known from its exposure on ITV. But in *Departure Lounge* its virtuosic reconstruction is a deconstruction of reality.

The most explicit American influences appear in the images accompanying *Rise to the Top* which is presumably the duo's anthem as they set off for video and audio glory in London's recording industry. They surely deserve every success.

Unfortunately though, the subsequent postlude, the very slick *I Like My Baby* video, points at an accompanying diminution of risk and reach.

The song and video are very attractive, very commercial and approachable.

But it is also devoid of the creative ambiguities, that distinctive mixture of exotic eroticism and subdued violence which makes the post-realism of their live show so rich an experience.