

## **Review: Huge, York Grand Opera House**

By Mike Laycock »

"YOU'RE the best Grand Opera House audience we've ever had!"

That was Big Ian's enthusiastic verdict on the fans who packed out the York theatre on Saturday night as the city's top party band, Huge, took to the stage.

And indeed, right from the off, the audience needed little encouragement to get up on its feet, and clap, stamp and sing along to an eclectic range of cover songs, from Queen, Elton John and Take That! to The Proclaimers and even Tom Jones - "no song too cheesy" for this event.



But, just in case some of us felt a little hesitant, Big Ian was a master of manipulation, working his audience with panache and great humour. At one stage, he got 20 or more women to climb on stage to dance and sing with the band, and later three brave men were persuaded to dance to a number as well.

Huge, which always refuses to take itself too seriously, blew away the mid-winter blues with a mix of music, panto and even old-time music hall. The concert reminded me a little of the Theatre Royal panto, which is led and controlled by another big personality who hails from the north-east. Just as with Berwick's panto, people know what they're getting with a Huge concert - a great big fun night out, which is why this show was a sell-out and next Saturday's repeat performance looks set to go the same way.

