



Billy Bragg, Bard of Barking, at the Big Day Out

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November 28, 2007 01:00pm

SOME artists transcend the generation gap. Others are such a part of the musical fabric it's hard to tell which generation they even belong to.

In 1996, BILLY BRAGG sang for the first generation of BIG DAY OUT goers. In 2008, he'll sing for a whole new generation of BIG DAY OUTers – and probably a few who were there last millennium, too.

Just one month before heading our way this summer, BILLY BRAGG, known to some as the Bard of Barking, will turn 50. He has spent at least 35 of those 50 years belting out songs on his guitar, songs about politics, love and the common man, some wildly funny, others stridently socialist, more than a few that bring a tear to the eye. Songs including *You Woke Up My Neighbourhood*, *She's Leaving Home*, *New England*, *Between the Wars* and *England, Half English*.

A folkie propelled by the passion of punk, BRAGG has also spent his career speaking up – supporting striking miners and forming the Red Wedge collective in the '80s, and bringing music and meaning to inmates with his latest initiative, Jail Guitar Doors.

Just as The Clash inspired him, BRAGG is now a beacon for young British musicians. Street-wise Londoners *Hard-Fi*, for example, have declared one of their new songs was inspired by BRAGG's 2006 novella, *The Progressive Pilgrim*. The book is about his nation's search through the ages for ways to enshrine fairness and justice, fighting racism, upholding punk ideals, and what "British values" might be. "I've been re-energised by writing it," BRAGG has said of the book.

Inspiring – and re-inspired. BRAGG says the fire is still burning inside him. "Since the process of selling CDs has become more volatile, live music is having a resurgence, which I think is good," he recently told the *Evening Standard*. "If you can do it live, if you can move an audience, then you've really got something, and maybe you don't have to go and work in an office or in a car factory."

Still on the job after all these years – Billy releases his first album in six years, *Mr Love & Justice* in March 08 - BILLY BRAGG holds a special place in the hearts of Australian music fans. He'll be moving us all over again at BIG DAY OUT 2008.

Lees and West present

Billy Bragg
SOLO SHOWS ON SALE MON 10 DECEMBER

BYRON BAY | Tuesday 22 January | Great Northern

Supported by Mick Thomas | Tickets: Great Northern Box Office or Oztix 1300 762 545 or Oztix outlets Rockinghorse, Skinnys, Central Station, Butterbeats (City & Valley), Music Mania (Southport), Sunflower Music (Pacific Fair), Moshpit (Maroochydore) and Cosmic (Ipswich)

SYDNEY | Saturday 26 January | The Metro

Presented by FBI | Supported by Mick Thomas, The Nightwatchman

Tickets: Ticketek 132 849 or www.ticketek.com.au (<http://www.ticketek.com.au>) / The Metro Box Office

☎ 02 9550 3666

MELBOURNE | Wednesday 30 January | Prince of Wales

Presented by Radio 3RRR | Supported by Mick Thomas, The Sure Thing

Tickets: Ticketmaster 136 100 / www.ticketmaster.com.au (<http://www.ticketmaster.com.au>) or Polyester, Readings St Kilda, Prince of Wales Box Office

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Tickets: BOCS Ticketing ☎ 08 9484 1133 / www.bocsticketing.com.au (<http://www.bocsticketing.com.au>) or 78 Records, Mills, Planet Video, Beat Music, Karrinyup

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