

review

■ TRIPOD: POD AUGUST NIGHTS

Where: Spanish Club, 59 Johnston St, Fitzroy, Thursdays until August 31

Reviewer: Michael Ward

I ALWAYS had an idea Tripod were good, but I suspected this impression came from being exposed to them only in small doses: 10-minute spots at the Comedy Festival gala or a single song beneath the closing credits of a defunct TV sketch show.

Pod August Nights, the musical comedy trio's annual series of live shows throughout the month of, er,

August, is the first entire Tripod performance I've seen. And boy, have I been remiss. These guys are good. These guys are great. These guys are jaw-hang-wide-open, drool-slowly-drip-out brilliant.

Musically, Yon (the gnomic one), Gatesy (the "cool" one) and Scod (the one with the unfeasibly large sideburns) do not fail to impress, their songs coloured by perfect harmonies accompanied by vibrant acoustic guitar.

The group dynamic, with Yon more often than not the subject of the other guys' teasing, looks easy and offhand, but this sort of mucking around — never self-indulgent, mind — is actually a real skill.

Tripod's songs are informed

lyrically by their nerdy fascination with pretty girls, computer games, science fiction, comics, superheroes and the like, but there are often some acute and cutting observations on male-female relationships buried among the laughs.

The Pod August Night shows attract a youthful crowd — the Tripod fan base — who cheer old favourites such as *Krap Karate* and *Ugly Men With Beautiful Women*.

But it's the trio's encore that really deserves the biggest cheer. Unafraid of stripping the comedy away for a moment, they launch into three exquisitely performed David Bowie songs, underlining what superb musos they are when they're not playing it for laughs.



Pod almighty: (left to right) Gatesy, Scod and Yon. Picture: NAOMI JELLICOE