

Artist to Watch



Kimbra

The chanteuse stole our hearts, says 'RS' writer Angela Allan

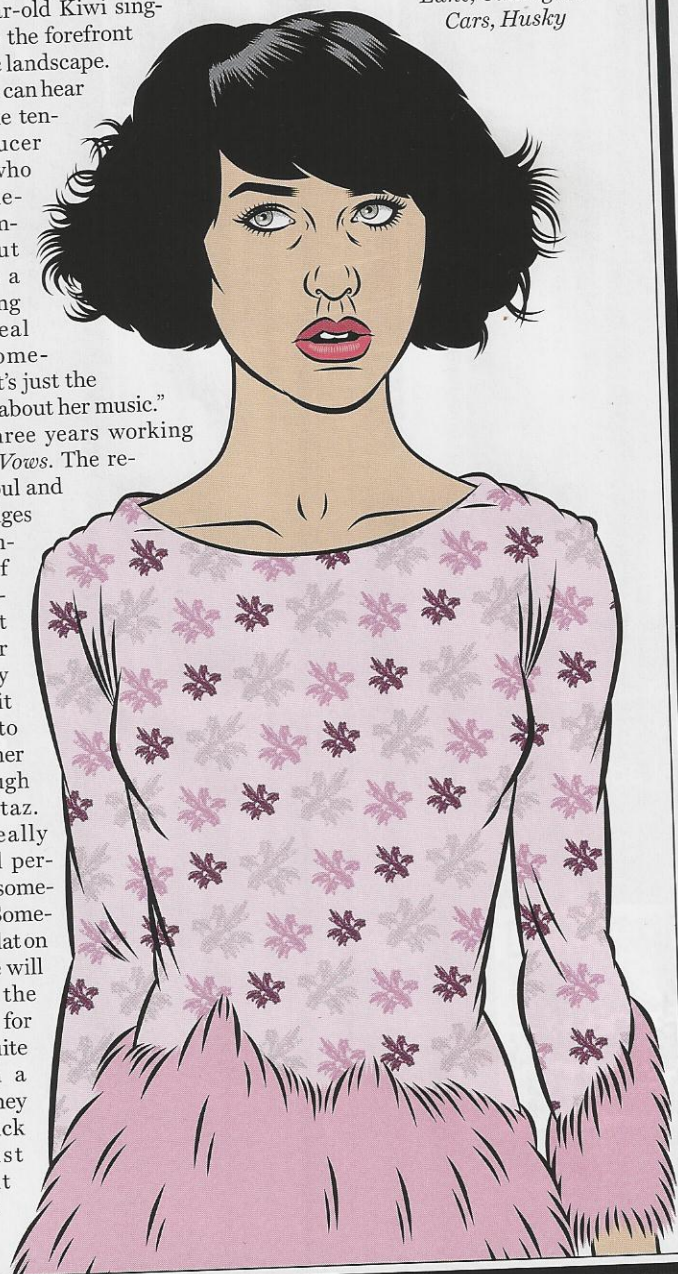
Kimbra not only shared in the success of "Somebody..." when it won Best Song at last year's ARIAs, but she also took the gong for Best Female Artist, and the Vanda and Young Songwriting Competition for her song "Cameo Lover". This year, Kimbra is back in the studio, and is performing at SXSW in March. Her star is only going to shine brighter.

WITH HER DOLL-LIKE APPEARANCE and cutesy costumes, Kimbra delivers her fusion of smoky soul and quirky pop with equal amounts of heartbreak and sass. But it was her forlorn vocal performance on Gotye's radiant "Somebody That I Used to Know" that pushed the relatively unknown 21-year-old Kiwi singer-songwriter onto the forefront of the world's sonic landscape.

"I think what you can hear from Kimbra is the tension," says producer François Tétaz, who worked on "Somebody..." and Kimbra's 2011 debut album, *Vows*. "It's a bit of a moral song... There's a real yearning for something. I think that's just the way Kimbra goes about her music."

Tétaz spent three years working with Kimbra on *Vows*. The record - a mix of soul and pop with hard edges - went gold within four weeks of its release. "Kimbra has these great two sides: her voice being very attractive and it has a darkness to it, and you feel her very truly through lyrics," says Tétaz. "She works really hard on a vocal performance to get something out of it. Sometimes, she'll fall flat on her face, but she will work through the right approach for it, and that's quite unusual; with a lot of singers they have their shtick and they just refine it, but Kimbra doesn't do that."

SHORTLIST 360, Lanie Lane, Calling All Cars, Husky



FROM LEFT: ADI FERTH; MICHAEL WELDON



The Immortal

Molly Meldrum

man is a genius, says writer Toby Creswell

LIKE THE LOVE CHILD OF Simon Cowell and Phil Spector, Ian "Molly" Meldrum is a pop genius. He understands the glory and the hub of pop music at its best. He has crusaded more tirelessly or more enthusiastically for the cause of Australian music than Molly Meldrum. The writing was on the wall in 1964 when he was ejected from the Beatles' Melbourne concert for being too excited. He was soon penning breathless columns for *Go-Set* that were gonzo journalism when Peter Thompson was still in charge. Molly's genius was to be right in the middle of things and to write about what he saw. In the mid-Sixties he unleashed his greatest and most derided talent as a producer. His masterpiece - Russell Morris's "The Real Thing" - remains the greatest single production in Australian music. Molly will always be remembered as the host of *Countdown* and for his often incoherent rants on television. But the simple reason he has been able to get away with it for 50 years is that he has a big and a pure heart, and he simply loves the pop machine. Get well soon, Molly - we miss you.

SHORTLIST Nick Cave, the Annandale Hotel, Chrissy Amphlett, Cold Chisel