





Tonight we saw the real Bob at last!

Some random thoughts on an evening spent with Mr. Dylan and his traveling show in St. Paul. Bob hit the stage at 7:45, sometimes pounding and sometimes caressing the keyboard, sounding like a bar cover band, and wasn't done until 9:45. This show was further testament to Bob's ability to continually keep creating new arrangements, new sounds, new styles, new melodies, year after year. I know legends like McCartney, the Who, Springsteen etc. have all appeared in St. Paul recently, but honestly who on earth can compare to Bob in terms of the ever-evolving variety of musical approaches year after year at age 61? And with no special lights, video screens, pyrotechnics like the other big names...Bob just presents his material in a straightforward fashion and that's how I prefer it. And how's this for variety: this was my 11th Dylan show, and there were about 10 songs I had not heard live before!

What I liked best this time around was instead of getting six acoustic songs, then six electric songs, etc like in the past, Bob mixed up the instrumentation and the tempos more, so the musical mood was always changing. The show flowed nicely between familiar standbys (Blowin', Times, Forever Young); totally revamped arrangements (Tombstone Blues, High Water, Its Alright Ma); faithful versions of End of the Innocence, Brown Sugar, and Old Man; taid-back medium tempo numbers (In the Summertime, Love Minus Zero); Broadway shuffle (Bye and Bye); and blow-away, blazing rockers (Watchtower, Honest With Me, Cold Irons). Then there was Summer Days. Bob and band raised the bar even further on this one, as I was astounded how the song kept building, building, BUILDING, wondering how each instrumental verse could be bigger than the one before it. Indescribable. Maybe the most rocking number I've heard Bob do live. Got to hear it again! Hard to figure how most of our section were sitting like a statue during this one.

Only spoken words of the night were brief band introductions, and before High Water a mention of "my man who met the end of the road in Eveleth". Unfortunately no harmonica action tonight, but that's Bob, he's going to have a different sound every time. Absolutely fremendous, enjoyable show, my personal highlights were Summer Days, Brown Sugar (I liked when Tony came out of his position to join in the "yeah,yeah,whoo! ending), and maybe Real You. Finally, being a pianist myself I thought Bob's keyboard playing was kinda funky! And how, despite having both hands occupied with the keyboard he can still do his little leg wiggles. We're not going to expenience an evening quite like we heard tonight. Thanks Bob, Larry, Tony, Charlie, George!

Brian K.



