



Thee Hypnotics

Stones' 'Loving Cup' was a second set and a lesson in funky-tonk, southern rock mixed with Stax and Grateful Dead style jams before going back to R&B with 'I'm A Hog For You Baby', which featured some outstanding harmonica work from Robinson. Three tracks from *Barefoot In The Head* followed, including the beautiful 'If You Had A Heart To Break' demonstrating both the fragility and power of Robinson's voice. A cover of John Lennon's 'Watching The Wheels' was an inspired encore, from the opening line, "People say I'm crazy, doing what I'm doing" to the final "No longer riding on the merry-go-round, I just had to let it go". It could've been written to all those who swear their allegiance to the Freak Flag.

Ben Adlam

JONATHAN WILSON
Omeara, London

TUESDAY 20TH MARCH

With a new band in tow, featuring long time bassist Dan Horne, Jason Roberts (guitar), Pete Remm (keys) and Josh Adams (drums), Wilson powers into songs from brand new album *Rare Birds*. 'Trafalgar' opens the set nicely with its Floyd-esque-meets-glam '70s rock feel, but only three songs in and the more opaque and lengthy War On Drugs sounding 'Over The Midnight' leaves a small portion of the audience audibly unmoved.

After the Beatley psych-pop of 'Miriam Monatague' regains the confidence of the more critical Wilson followers, *Fanfare* favourite 'Dear Friend' is given a brilliant performance that leads to roars of approval

before Wilson returns predominantly to the new album, peppering it with a brilliant rendition of 'Desert Raven' from the 2011 breakthrough album, *Gentle Spirit*.

What's decidedly noticeable is how hot the new band are, notably the subtle keyboard inflections, tones and triggered samples of Pete Remm and the solid drumming of Josh Adams; not forgetting the cool bass tone of Daniel Horne, who seems as happy with a Moog synth bass as he does pedaling those old West Coast vibes. Wilson veered between guitar and piano, finally shredding his fretboard magnificently on the set closing epic 'Valley Of The Silver Moon'. Wherever he goes with his songs and production, his mastery of the guitar is undeniable.

All said, a great show. Bring on the orchestra, choirs and special guest in September.

Jon 'Mojo' Mills

TONY, CARO AND JOHN
Café Oto, London

THURSDAY MARCH 29TH 2018

If you've spent much of the 45 years since recording a lo-fi psychedelic folk LP that only much later acquired the status of lost classic playing in blues bands, and if the replacement for dead founder member John Clark just happens to be a master harmonica player, then perhaps it's no surprise that the first outing your old songs have seen in over four decades comes across as slightly more rockist than this particular scribe had been anticipating.

Ambling onto stage as a five-piece that still retains lead singer, songwriter and guitarist Tony Doré and Caro - Caroline Clark - and with two members clad in the kind of tie-dye the band spent much of the early '70s making in their Fulham hippie pad, the years of stage craft that Doré has accrued clearly stand them in good stead as he's an affable, dominant presence. And when they hit the selected songs from their sole 1972 album, *All On The First Day*, running, you're reminded what utterly singular things they are.

Over the evening, they throw in covers of Dylan, The Incredible String Band and the Velvet, which gives you some idea of the eclectic mix of influences that fed into their brief existence. There's also a traditional Scottish folk song and a raw and raging later number penned after their early exposure to the punk scene. Throw all that together and add the fact there are now two professors in the band, and you get the left-field, literate, art school folk-punk set on offer here, served up by aging bedsit auteurs who would still be manning the barricades were it not for the lure of the pub.

Hugh Dellar

THEE HYPNOTICS
Prince Albert, Brighton

SUNDAY 8TH APRIL

For a few brief years Thee Hypnotics' star burned magnesium hot, all skinny black leathers, shades, long hair and strung-out cool. Live they were a wash of strobes, drone and arrogance, but, kind of inevitably,

their supernova collapsed into a black hole of drugs, corporate rock, tour bus crashes and more drugs. Singer Jim Jones went on to front the thunderous Revue and Righteous Mind, while cool-for-Catweazle guitarist Ray Hanson formed his Whores Of Babylon. But 31 years after their first release, a *Righteously Recharged* vinyl box set is in the shops, and the band is back pounding stages.

Tonight's venue is tiny, sold out way in advance to a rabid crowd. From the first power chord of 'Soul Trader', things feel right; Hanson's riffs crunch like black snow, Jones' Lizard King-meets-White Panther vocals throbbing and yelping. They harness the snarl and strut of The Cramps on a sleazily sinister 'Kissed By The Flames', and invoke massive Hendrix guitar on 'Come Down Heavy'. But things really kick into high gear when the stage lights are turned down, the strobes are set to stun, and the band launch into 'Preachin' and Ramblin' - a B-side that tonight reveals as a stone-cold banger.

From here it's magnificently abandoned; maracas at full pelt, electric riffs spinning out of Ray's guitar, and drums rumbling and splashing, into the triple threat of 'Choose My Own Way', 'Revolution Stone' and 'Shakedown'. Jones and Hanson kneel on the stage, performing a voodoo incantation to the gods of rock 'n' roll's past, revelling in their second wave of adoration. The band distill all the very best clichés into a potent essence - neck a shot of it while you can.

Kate Hodges

PHOTO: JEFF PITCHER