


# Live Review: Sleigh Bells – Liquid Rooms, 22/08/12

If the apocalypse does come in 2012 then it'll be carried on the vocals of Alexis Krauss.

In a gig that started with military timing, Sleigh Bells hammered their way through their two album back catalogue with the unhinged power of a hydrogen bomb.

The opening chords of 'Demons' kick like a mule, beginning the sonic assault on the full and predominantly female crowd. 

'True Shred Guitar' ratchets the reverb up to 11 and sounds like the manic musings of a 23rd century schizophrenic in the best way possible. On stage Alexis revels and raves her way through the song, throwing out some exquisite head jamming and hair swirling to accompany her supercharged voice. Pre-programmed drums, a major-league strobe and the torrential rifts of Derek Miller and touring guitarist Jason Boyer provide the perfect accompaniment to this temptress of a frontwoman.

'Born To Lose' and 'Comeback Kid', both from this year's *Reign Of Terror*, work as the perfect mid-gig duo, with the former's sweetness proving the perfect foil for the latter's spice. Indeed the manic mix of vocals and moshing guitars on 'Comeback Kid' create a hypnotic howler of a song that proves to be the peak of their power-thrashing barrage.

'Infinity Guitars' delves back into the hits of the band's debut and screams with the originality and beautiful weirdness that make them such a unique proposition. Whaling guitars squeeze every last ounce of wattage from the EIGHT amps on stage, stretching to keep pace with Alexis' soaring voice.

After so much mind-bending fuzz the band relent somewhat, granting the clemency of 'Rill Rill' to provide some calm in the eye of the storm. Alexis is left alone for the comparatively delicate number, happily hopping over the stage barrier into the crowd to provide an intimate sing-a-long for those in the front few rows. Pulse-quickenning stuff.

But the show's energy and hyperactivity quickly spike once more with the triumphant closing trio of 'Never Say Die', 'Riot Rhythm' and 'A/B Machines'.

No encore, no messing about – just over an hour of hard-hitting, brain-rattling hits. Whilst Sleigh Bells may have been shrouded in hipster chic when they first emerged, their commitment and ferocity live dispel any illusions that they are not the real thing. Alexis is undoubtedly one of the finest frontwomen currently striding the stage, holding the attention of every eye in the room for the entirety of the show like a leather-clad Venus. The relationship between her and Derek appears refreshingly tender considering they produce such fiery howitzers of songs. They should be massive – and with performances like this they soon will be.