

REVIEW – The Charlatans at The Usher Hall



The Charlatans, like Ocean Colour Scene and several other British bands who appear to be everlasting, have been fortunate to enjoy their illustrious 26-year career playing to consistently healthy crowds – and the fans from their heyday are still sticking by them.

And despite losses in their line-up, with the deaths of keyboardist Rob Collins and drummer Jon Brookes, they have remained positive, and have still released music while touring extensively.

They are visually positive. Tim Burgess still looks like he is still in his early 30s, and swans about the stage with his signature acid house, Madchester dance moves. Besides that, the band are sonically tight and precise, and already performing well for Verve drummer Pete Salisbury – who now sits behind the kit and returns the important element to the band that Brookes prematurely left.

The band rattled through several tracks from their new album *Modern Nature*, while presenting the steady audience with a selection of their various older material. While the crowd weren't entirely knowledgeable of the new songs, the intensity of their older tracks was returned with a highly spirited response.

Tracks such as 'One to Another', 'Just When You're Thinkin' Things Over' and the vigorous 'The Only One I Know' erupted the audience, while set closer 'Sproston Green' allowed the fans to squeeze in one last quake in the Usher Hall floor to emphasise their sheer delight.

Yet these new tracks shine a new light on a band still wonderfully relevant after so many years and records. 'So Oh' and 'Let The Good Times Be Never Ending' offer a new wave of audible renovation, where we still witness such youthful stamina from a band pushing the big 50 mark. And they're evidently ecstatic to still be touring – as Tim Burgess snaps photos from his iPhone, and the others glance at the crowd with a modest grin.