

Review – Noel Gallagher's High Flying Birds Live

The audience was well warmed up by former Kasabian front-man Tom Meighan. With Keith Richard sunglasses and shaggy fur coat, like a Northern shaman he kicks up sparks in the air and magic into the night.

It could be 1968 or 1973 but it's now, and the likes of Don't Give In and Movin' On offer a redemptive slice of rock n' roll. Club Foot and Fire sung by Meighan with the right attitude and no shortage of raw adrenaline is a sight to behold. Noel Gallagher has made his successful solo career look effortless, his most recent album Council Skies is arguably his best so far. He opens with the driving atmospheric single Pretty Boy joined by former Oasis guitarist Gem Archer at his side. Significantly, some of his most arresting tracks are stand-alone releases such as We're Gonna Get There In The End another punch the air belter from a well that never appears to run dry

Also on that list is We're on Our Way Now which encourages many to join in and get lost in the moment.

A few drunks stomp to the front in Santa hats and shout for Oasis songs but soon disappear again. If I Had A Gun...remains one of the finest songs in his solo canon during a set that essentially splits into two.

He offers to take us back to the 1990s with a slew of Oasis classics cranking up that set with another non-album track Going Nowhere. This one really should have been on Be Here Now but having a collection of b-sides to rival their singles was one of many reasons the people loved Oasis.

The crossover Kinks and La's influenced Importance of Being Idle, the last of eight No.1 hits for Noel's old band, was a reminder that late-period Oasis could still hit the spot with well-crafted songs such as this. The encore begins with a cover of "wee Bobby Dylan" and Manfred Mann hit Quinn The Eskimo (The Mighty Quinn). The Oasis set resumes with a low-key version of Live Forever and a final encore of Don't Look Back In Anger. For this, The Chief doesn't sing a note asking the audience not to let him down as they sing every note.

It's been scientifically proved that singing with other people is beneficial for your mental, physical and spiritual health and this merry congregation doesn't disappoint. It's a glorious moment and a reminder that these songs seem to take on a life of their own in Glasgow. It was almost 30 years ago that I first saw Oasis at the Barrowlands, when Liam walked off early in the set, Noel took over on vocals.

He later said it was that night he learned that he could take over the front-man role when required. Nearly 30 years on he's made a pretty decent job of it.

He remains a solid performer and one of the last great songwriters of our times.

Noel Gallagher's High Flying Birds at Hydro, Glasgow.





PHOTO Richard Purden