

# Review – Richard Hawley, Usher Hall

**Edinburgh is keen to prove itself after word has got out that Glasgow Barrowlands is the tour highlight so far.**

Hawley arrives on stage in front of a 'Welcome to Sheffield' civic sign and delivers a double thumbs to the already vocal audience. The velvet voiced crooner straps on his Les Paul Gold Top complete with tremolo arm and delivers some guitar hero moves during She Brings The Sunlight. Two For His Heels, the debut single, and Radio 6 favourite from his new long-player In This City They Call You Love, has an infectious twang reminiscent of the late Duane Eddy.

Prism In Jeans already sounds like another well crafted and arranged classic up there with Tonight The Streets Are Ours. It's a track full of evocative echoes of different times and was a Terry Wogan favourite, often played on his Breakfast show back in 2007. It really soars tonight and delighting in the atmosphere, Hawley mentions the general election and an opportunity to "get rid of the Tories".

The reaction from the audience is almost deafening, dispatching one of the loudest cheers of the night and that's saying something. In contrast, People is a gentle ballad where we are guided by Hawley's voice for a hymn to the working-class spirit of his home city.

Hear That Lonesome Whistle Blow is another elegant piece of classic-country tinged balladry full of gorgeous hooks and

melody that you find yourself humming long after the gig has finished. It couldn't be further from the doggerel that passes for country music today. A couple from Carlisle dance in each other's arms at Coles Corner.

It's their first time seeing Hawley, and they are lost in the song, as we all are. He finishes with the grand mysteries of The Ocean where the textures and sonic swoops soon flood the Usher Hall.

Something magical hangs in the air as we empty out into the cool summer night into pubs, onto buses and then on home enchanted by one of song's greatest magicians.



PHOTO Richard Purden



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