

Lulu live at Usher Hall

As a Scot raised on American music and culture it made sense that Lulu's first earth-shattering hit Shout should open and close this show at Usher Hall.

Originally performed by the Isley Brothers, the power of her voice still hits you in the pit of your stomach 60 years on. By her early teens, she was known as Scotland's Brenda Lee and there's something of her life raised in the East End of Glasgow that remains in her voice, especially during her self-penned cut, Where The Poor Boys Dance. Tonight, the track never sounded better, and even with a crack team of musicians behind her, that voice remains the star of the show.

Much like her fellow Glaswegian Frankie Miller and Cockney Scot Rod Stewart, it was American soul singers that provided essential inspiration. When she moved to Atlantic Records in 1969 to record two albums they didn't provide a hit despite those long-players standing the test of time with music lovers.

It seemed the general public didn't want this version of Lulu, 'Why Should they!' she once told this writer. There are special mentions for John Lennon and Paul McCartney and of course, David Bowie who recognised her singular talent while promising to make her another hit record. Bowie appears on the big screen for a duet of The Man Who Sold The World taken from his 2000 Glastonbury performance. He was as good as his word, but soon Bowie would relocate to America and the connection was short-lived.

Lulu brings a lot of Glasgow soul to her Bond soundtrack hit The Man With The Golden Gun and invites the son of Lonnie Donegan on stage for an arresting duet of I'll Never Fall In Love Again. She leaves Donegan to perform his song Thank You Texas and it goes down a storm.

Her cover of Teardrops gets the audience on their feet and the atmosphere goes up another gear during Relight My Fire with Lulu chewing up the high notes without a problem. It's stunning to watch her perform at this level at the age of 76 in a way that most of her male contemporaries could only dream of.

With as much spirit and punch as she did as a teenager in Glasgow back in 1964, she delivers Shout, one more time. Every audience member leaves brimming with positive energy, knocked out by a Glaswegian powerhouse. That champagne at the end of the night was well deserved.

Champagne For Lulu at Usher Hall



PHOTO Richard Purden