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Sunday, October 10, 2010

Concert review part deux: The xx at Granada Theater (October 8)

by Jason Hensel

This was one of those rare shows that Dallas receives sporadically, where its effects could change the North Texas musical landscape for attentive musicians taking notes.

DALLAS — Oliver Sim moves onstage like a wave, his shoulders rising and dipping. It's hard to tell if he's keeping musical time or if the rhythm is following him. And when he stops, standing straight, realize that something is not quite right with the world. But then he starts again the bodily pulsations, and the world's order is back in beat.

The xx went on to play at ACL on Saturday. Check out a review of their show here.



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The xx

This is The xx and their created world -- one where it's about the build-up, but more importantly, the valleys between the swells.

Formed in 2005 in London, this band consisting of best friends Sim (bass guitar and vocals) and Romy Madley Croft (guitar and vocals), with drummer/beatmaster Jamie Smith, brought their polished show to the Granada Theater in Dallas on Friday. It was the last show of a tour for a band that's seen remarkable success the past year: They recently won Britain's Mercury Prize for best album of 2009.

The band took the stage in a haze of red lights before launching into "Intro," when the light show careened into solid, white brights that brought to mind an air raid. Fittingly, the light show gelled as the band began one of its most popular songs, "Crystallized," from the band's only full-length album. Show highlights included a restructured, lean opening to their popular single "Islands," and a cover of the 1994 No. 1 hit by Robin S., "Show Me Love," which they grafted with their own song, "Shelter."

Throughout the night, Sim and Croft's complimentary vocals kept the atmosphere tense, not in a negative way, but like the feeling of falling in love for the first time and not knowing what to expect next. The band was in control of an audience that was eager to sing along, dance, and record every movement with iPhones held high.

This was one of those rare shows that Dallas receives sporadically, where its effects could change the North Texas musical landscape for any attentive musicians taking notes during the performance. From the opening volley to the dramatic ending with Sim attacking a lone cymbal -- and which included musicians from the opening acts singing and playing other drums along -- The xx showed how to produce a fully

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engaged show. It was one that was at all times sultry, melodic, cohesive, minimalist, and energetic. Much like the bass that reverberated throughout the venue -- you could feel it trembling in your nose -- this show will be remembered by all those who attended as one of the year's best.

Zola Jesus, the first opening act, played its synth-heavy, tribal-drumming, overly moaning vocals songs to a half-full and polite venue. When second act, Warpaint, took the stage, the Granada was full, and the energy was high for their dynamic and well-structured songs. Warpaint was the perfect segue for The xx.

The show, as all great shows should do, left the audience just satisfied enough to want more.

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Posted by *Sarah Blaskovich*

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Posted by *Sarah Blaskovich*

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ahalikias, says:

You liked it better than i did. i thought it was a little sleepy.

Anonymous

3 days, 1 hour ago

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Scott Doyle, says:

Very interesting. I was pretty skeptical on whether XX would be a good live show, simply seems like it would be tough unless you're a hardcore indie hipster.

Probably would have gone if it wasn't sold out, but I doubt I'll pay admission just for them at any point...would be awesome to see them at a festival, though.

Verified

2 days, 5 hours ago

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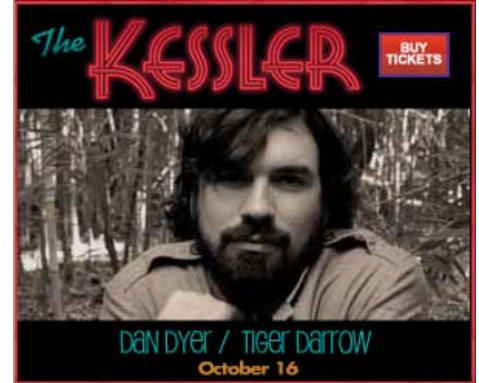
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