

Piercingmetal

New York, NY
November 15th, 2009

Artist: Blackmore's Night
Venue: The Fillmore NY (New York, NY)
Date: 10/29/2009
Opener: Minstrel Albert
Label: SPV Records

This has been an interesting week for me so far and had begun with some crushing Black Metal at this very same venue courtesy of Satyricon. I followed it up with some Melodic Doom on Monday, a little Glam Rock on Tuesday and now here I was ready to experience for the first time in person the Renaissance Rocking might of Blackmore's Night. This would probably be the most unique out of my experiences this week for while tomorrow would be the Dethklok show and a Halloween Haunting with The Misfits on Saturday, I had seen those acts before. That means tonight I would be walking straight into the past in some sense based on all of the period garb that was surrounding me. You might not know this but the audience all get suited up in lavish gowns, tights, kilts and ruffled puffy shirts like something out of a movie based on the olden days or "Ye Olden Days" for that matter. Sadly I've no kilt, because I probably would have gotten into the spirit of things and since I was dressed head to toe in black attire myself, I told those who raised a curious eye to me that I was playing the part of the Metal Black Knight this evening. It seemed to work. The show was held at The Fillmore NY and would be a seated show in the main level area and a standing room only set up at the back bar and upstairs region. It was my first seated show at this space so it was slightly tricky to navigate for the purposes of photos. Opening up the night's festivities would be Minstrel

Albert who played a wide variety of wind instruments. He would be preceded by Earl Grey who played a string instrument but I did not catch a single moment of his brief set.

The Fillmore stage was decorated like a castle and there were even some fake boulders on the floor before it for added effect. Paintings and faux stone appeared all around us and as the intro music of “God Save The Keg” began the group walked out to resounding cheers and an audience on their feet until the show got underway – they would all remain standing later in the night in case you were wondering. If you’re still unsure about this group then let me explain quickly before continuing on. Blackmore’s Night is the brainchild of former Deep Purple/Rainbow guitarist Ritchie Blackmore and his significant other Candice Night and together they have been playing Renaissance Fairs and Festivals with their unique style of music that blends Rock with traditional Folk melody and even some Classical Music. The result is really, really interesting. The audience gets into the spirit of things by dressing up as we had mentioned before. Their most recent album is entitled “Secret Voyage” and it continues their tradition of quality music that we found on the albums before it like “Village Lanterne” and “Winter Songs”. Tonight’s set would feature a little something from these and the rest of their back catalog. If you happened to be close enough to the stage you would see the image of a set list with about thirty or so songs listed on it and they keep it like this so they can pick and choose as the night goes on. If you saw the band the night before there was a good chance that the next night would be a lot of song swaps. Candice is a stunning beauty and as I learned from other sources is a former model as well. Her smile alone is enough to warm the coldest hearts and her soft voice makes you want to listen to any story that she lines out. She pretty much acts as the spokeswoman for the group as Ritchie doesn’t say anything at all unless he is whispering some plan changes as the night progresses.

The first real song of the night was the driving “Locked Within The Crystal Ball” which is the opening track on the “Secret Voyage” album. It’s become a fast favorite of mine and for good reason. As Candice discussed some of the recent things going on in their lives she said that since the last time they appeared in NYC she and Ritchie had finally tied the knot and she proudly showed off the ring on her finger. Blackmore doesn’t talk at all during the show and instead opts to be both musical director and sometimes stage

manager. One of the things Candice did shine a light on was how they continually are hoping to help animal charities and tonight would be “Kitty Korner” which I believe originates in her native Long Island. She said this with a slight accent from the region and I give them credit, especially being an animal, and cat lover myself. As the night continued Candice spoke of the time when they met the classic Folk legend Joan Baez. She said when they met her they said “hey we cover one of your songs” to the singer’s reply of “no one covers my songs, except Judas Priest....” This got a hearty chuckle out of the crowd. They would deliver a song written by a member of the audience with “Far, Far Away” and this was a nice track and then came their staple number of “Home Again”. I felt it was a little early for this one, but they always switch things up so I dealt with it. Apparently the song is now extended into a medley of other tunes that include “Hava Nagila”, “Drink” and “Valderee Valdera”. It worked for what it was supposed to do and that meant getting folks out of the seats but I think that I would have preferred the did one of the other potential numbers than some of these sing along covers.

The group also features the talents of Bard David of Larchmont (keys, organ, harpsichord, accordion and pipe organ), Gypsy Rose (violin), Earl Grey of Chamay (bass, mandolin and guitar), Squire Malcolm (drums and percussion) and Minstrel Albert (bagpipes, flute and wind instruments). Each of them proving to be very adept at their craft and as the night progressed, we got a short solo from Bard David and Squire Malcolm. I had to say that the Squire’s solo was rather heavy and proved him to be a very solid drummer. Of course Candice chooses not to only sing her wonderful notes but during the night she plays flutes, whistles and some sort of small horn. Ritchie swaps between conventional guitar to mandolin during the show. From here we would get the only Deep Purple song with “Black Night” and this seems to be a crowd pleaser as they sing along the guitar riff with Ritchie. There were a few other numbers listed like “Soldier Of Fortune” and “Ariel” which is a Rainbow number but neither of these would be played this evening. I thought the crowd would need restraints when Candice asked them what they wanted the band to play and after several minutes of shouting they did “The Circle”. A little slow fanfare came via “Ghost Of A Rose” and “Wind In The Willows” but that was only leading us to my perhaps very favorite tune of all which is “The Clock Ticks On”. I love how Ritchie leads into this one on the hurdy gurdy because

it's just so unique and sounds amazing. The final number would come via "The Village Lanterne" and was over. There didn't actually appear to be any encores per se, they just played the last tune and said their goodbyes.

Despite one or two song choice issues in my mind I had to say that I really enjoyed this show and would see them again when possible. Over the past few nights I had read that they did "Wish You Were Here" from "Winter Carols" and no, this is not the Pink Floyd song that bears the same name, but it is a beautiful song. I also would have loved to hear them do "Ocean Gypsy" which is a classic Renaissance tune. I'm now speaking of the band and not the time period and I had only recently caught a reunited Renaissance further uptown a few weeks ago and they were amazing. I think it would be even more enjoyable if getting to do so at a Renaissance Faire of some kind because then the whole experience just comes together a little better. Check out some of their recordings and live concert DVD's because they are worthy of inclusion in anyone's music library.