

Strand Theatre Shelbyville, Inc.

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Eastern Wing Band ? Review

Written by David on November, 16 2009

The often rebellious spirit of country music with its honky-tonk hymns and moody ballads echoed off the walls of the Strand Theatre Saturday night during a two-set concert by the Eastern Wing Band.

This five-piece band is an exceptionally tight group of musicians who revel in contemporary country songs and classic rock and roll tunes in an entertaining style that evokes the intimate atmosphere of a bar-room.

Originally formed in 1994, by lead singer Ricky Myers, the Eastern Wing Band came to Shelbyville Saturday night to play for family, friends and fans in a concert produced and filmed by Smashed Productions and benefitting the ongoing renovations at the Strand.

The band's final song of the evening, a tune by Tim McGraw, was dedicated by Myers to a local woman who influenced his life: his recently deceased grandmother. Prior to this the band spent nearly two-hours in an extended, musically significant, romp through several styles of country mixed with smattering of rock tunes featuring a Chuck Berry classic and two songs by Indiana legends Guns N Roses and John Mellencamp. The band also played an original song "Overheat in a Heartbeat," a rather haunting and lament-full ballad inspired by love gone wrong.

This band's version of "Every Rose has its Thorns" was particularly unique, a slowed down, countrified take on Guns N Roses which highlighted both the fine play of lead guitarist Chris Reeves and the strong vocal harmonies of Myers and bassist Johnny Ray. Equally significant was the hard, fast and crisp virtuoso guitar work of Reeves on Chuck Berry's classic "Johnny B Good," a tour-de-force rendition which saw Reeves walking out among and into the crowd while wailing on his guitar.

However, the primary strength, focus and fan favorites of this band is country music ranging from the tunes of Buck Owens and George Jones to the more modern style of Brooks and Dunn.

Eastern Wing Band emphasizes the jamming aspect of country, especially in the animated fiddle and keyboard style of Preston Kerns and Myers' tenor crooning, which works exceptionally well on slow-ballad like tunes, where his crooning style resonates well with the talents of the seasoned musicians who make up this very professional sounding band.

"I think that the Eastern Wing Band put on a very good show and have a very good energy between them," said audience member Stephanie Jones. "I hope they come back to play again."

In short, Saturday night's show was an entertaining and lively tour of country music performed by an accomplished 5-piece band of skilled musicians who revel and seem to live in the music of Good Ole Boys. It was a concert full of fat sounds, raucous energy and smooth harmonious songs as this band varied its tempo and style to fit the many moods and tones that comprise country music.

Submitted by: Terrance Aldridge

This review does not express the opinion of the Strand Theatre.

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