

Camera Obscura @ Komedia

Contributed by Elz Russell
Wednesday, 18 April 2007

Much like the experience Nicole had, I was undecided about going to see Camera Obscura until the very last minute, when I had the sudden, desperate urge to go down to Brighton and enjoy some twee Scottish pop (with support from twee Sheffield folk-pop). I was somewhat surprised that the show hadn't sold out; as my companion informed me, the week the tickets were available for sale, they were advertised as "selling fast" - and apparently never did. Still, that was my gain as I successfully acquired one a mere three days prior to the gig.

After a cursory ID check, my companion and I made our way to the stage. Some girls had already camped out in the middle, roughly where Tracyanne would later stand, so we sat down on the floor to the right and discussed linguistics for some reason. Hey, it passed the time.

The support band, Monkey Swallows The Universe, came on at about quarter to nine and played six or seven songs, including new single 'Little Polveir', previous single 'Science', the amazing (free for download) b-side 'Florence', and several other songs whose names I forget but were also brilliant. In spite of being down a guitarist, they still played some incredibly good folk-pop. Amusingly, before I knew they were supporting, I had described MSTU to a friend as "rather Camera Obscura-y", and I still stand by that description. I almost wished their set had been longer than half an hour, and I hope I'll catch them next time they come through Brighton.

Having set the mood successfully, MSTU left to loud applause, and the room began to fill up properly. It was around this time that the biggest surprise of the evening arrived behind me - the rowdy drunken Camera Obscura fanboys. Yes, you read that correctly. They weren't too bad while we waited for the band to arrive, apart from the odd shout of "Woo!" or "Cam-er-a! Ob-scur-a!" Once Gavin (bass) and Kenny (guitar) arrived on stage, things started to get a little bit louder. And when the lovely Tracyanne turned up, well. She took the shouting very well. She replied to a bellow of "LET'S GET OUT OF THIS COUNTRY!" from next to my left ear with a shy smile and a calm "Not yet."

They opened with 'Come Back Margaret' and went on to play through the majority of third album Let's Get Out Of This Country, excluding only 'I Need All The Friends I Can Get', because "no one ever claps in the right places". As expected, 'Lloyd, I'm Ready To Be Heartbroken' went down the best, although the number of fans there who were deeply in love with the band meant no song went underappreciated. Other highlights included 'Tears For Affairs', the next single, and the set closer 'Razzle Dazzle Rose', a song which seems to go on forever, but does it quite well.

'Country Mile' was announced with a small amount of heckling, due to the song's inclusion in recent adverts for Tesco (see the ad here). However, the band smiled it all off and played a fantastic rendition. Standing directly in front of Kenny as I was, I got to watch him making all of the wonderful haunting noises on his guitar. 'Country Mile' also brought about an enormous fight between one of the rowdy drunken fanboys and someone else. Having thrown his beer over me, the person next to me, Kenny and Kenny's pedals, he fell over, picked his fight and then apparently conducted some sort of drug deal, all in the space of that one song. Tracyanne quipped that they'd considered leaving it out of the set as it always incites violence.

There was a brief break, during which I snagged Kenny's beer-soaked setlist, before the band came back out to play a two song encore, ending the evening in the best possible way with a cover and previous single 'Eighties Fan'.

Setlist:

Come Back Margaret
Keep It Clean
The False Contender
Tears For Affairs
Let's Get Out Of This Country
Teenager
Books Written For Girls
Dory Previn
Lloyd, I'm Ready To Be Heartbroken
If Looks Could Kill
Country Mile
I Love My Jean
Razzle Dazzle Rose

Super Trouper (ABBA cover)
Eighties Fan