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WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 28, 2007

BOB MOULD

John & Peter's - New Hope,
PA

November 10, 2007



It's not too often that one gets to see a musical icon up close and personal. But for the 60-some odd fans at New Hope, PA's John & Peter's, tonight was a very special night. Usually home to local bands and open mic nights, John & Peter's is not exactly your typical rock and roll establishment. Three steps down from the main bar area is a small basement room with a stained-glass ceiling that sits just inches above your head. As patrons entered, they were shown to assigned seats at tables and booths around the performance area, which was simply a slab of hard wood at the room's left, elevated only a few inches off the floor.

"Well this is intimate," Mould said to open the show which, due to the close quarters, initially felt more like an audition than an official concert. Most of the shows on Mould's current tour in support of his recent DVD release *Circle of Friends* consisted of a short 30-minute set followed by a question-and-answer period and a screening of the DVD. However, this night saw Mould playing a full solo show, split between acoustic and electric numbers that spanned his career from Hüsker Dü through his more recent electronically-tinged solo material. While initially hesitant, Mould opened up with the excellent "Hardly Getting Over It," a song that he opted not to play the previous night because his parents were in attendance (the introspective Hüsker Dü classic references his grandfather's death and his parents' mortality). Other acoustic gems included the Sugar hit "Hoover Dam" and the *Workbook* highlight "Brasilia Crossed With Trenton." Mould also performed a new song from his upcoming solo album *District Line* called "Again and Again" which, despite its familiar style, was met with a lukewarm response from the crowd.

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In fact, through much of the set's first act, the crowd of mostly hipsters, 40-somethings, and 40-something hipsters could be heard talking to one another over their drinks. It was not until Mould switched to electric guitar that the crowd became more reverent. After glorious hoots and hollers from the audience, Mould launched into "Paralyzed" from 2005's *Body of Song*, followed shortly after by the Husker Du staple "I Apologize." As awkward as it can be to see a one-man electric guitar performance, Mould attacked his instrument with fiery precision, which was enough to make one forget the vow he made several years ago to stop performing electric guitar rock gigs due to the strain it put on his eardrums. Finally, after closing the set proper with "Celebrated Summer," Mould returned for a concise encore of the *Workbook* highlight "See a Little Light" and another Hüsker Dü number, "Makes No Sense at All."

As fans lingered afterward chatting, sharing stories, and buying music for their idol to autograph, it was apparent they had witnessed something special. At one point in the evening, Mould suggested that he should come back next year. It's a good bet that each and every one of the fans here tonight hopes he makes good on that promise.

--Frank Valish

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