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Nick Oliveri "January 23, 2010"

Khyber, Philadelphia, PA, USA

Truth be told, I was a little nervous going to Nick Oliveri's Death Acoustic show at the Khyber in Philadelphia on Sunday evening. Oliveri isn't exactly known for being uptight and, judging by his newest album of acoustic tracks, it really could have been a train wreck in the making. As it turns out, the fears were completely unfounded.

Oliveri has been making these acoustic shows a near regular routine for himself over the past few years as he's played solo and also partnered up with Dwarves buddy Blag Dahlia. This time around it was just Oliveri and his sticker covered acoustic guitar for the majority of the show. Solo, with no back up, Oliveri brought out a setlist that was expected, including songs from his variety of past and current projects as well as some covers: "Millionaire," "Six Shooter," "Green Machine," Subhumans' "Wake Up Screaming," Turbonegro's "Back To Dungaree High." Michelle Madden joined him for the last handful of songs, contributing vocals to the likes of "So High," "Four Corners," and "Ode to Clarissa." Oliveri, again solo, closed the night out with a cover of Roky Erickson's "Bloody Hammer" arranged nicely to segue into "Auto Pilot."



Although Oliveri would walk away from the mic and turn from the audience occasionally when not singing, he seemed in good spirits. At one point, he recalled a story about him and the guitar player in his band at the time, "my friend, Josh [Homme of Queens of the Stone Age]," taking LSD during a show in Switzerland. Needless to say it, mayhem ensued. Oliveri also mentioned he'd just returned from Norway where he and members of Turbonegro have been recording for their new band.

The concept of Nick Oliveri solo and acoustic, on paper, doesn't sound all that promising. While other musicians make substantial adjustments to their arrangements when unplugging, Oliveri makes minimal changes and still screams his head off, when needed, while working a fierce whisper at other times. Musically, he's far smarter than he lets on. Acoustic, yes; dull, no way. Oliveri's got nothing left to prove and his aptly named Death Acoustic tour makes that clear.

- Corinne

posted January 27, 2010

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