

Performance - British Invasion



The British Invasion of Oakland's Uptown

By Sharon Reid

The Who, the Yardbirds and the Beatles...if you weren't around to see these bands live, this is probably as close as you'll get to the true experience. With three great tribute bands, talented and tireless go-go dancers and classic archival footage of legendary musicians, the Uptown in Oakland played host to what can only be described as a happening and a real feast for the senses.

The Hoo opened the evening, covering well-known as well as more obscure hits from the Who, followed by the RaveUps whose covers of The Yardbirds' classics were spot on.

... And in the end, the Sun Kings conjured up the Beatles due in no small part to Drew Harrison's likeness to John Lennon, in both look and sound. Chris Solberg of the RaveUps said the idea for this series of Red Coat revivals began simply with "a bunch of old guys who wanted to play music," most of whom have been a part of the musical landscape in any number of capacities since the '60s, some even earlier, and all of whom have a *heart full of soul*.

This was the third invasion of its kind with, we hope, many more to come. Stepping into the Uptown night club was a trip back in time to a 1960s British music hall, I guess, having nothing but film clips and questionable witness accounts to go by. The vibe fell somewhere between Austin Powers and Sergeant Pepper, "Laugh-In" and a "sit-in" with 60s images from both the "Mods and Rockers" and the hippies.

The nostalgia was fueled by J.O.E.'s light show and the suave stylings of Emcee Daniel Swan. The Uptown is an ideal venue for this kind of show. You can step into the *Glass Onion* of the stage area with the music, dancing and light show, you can step outside for some cool air and a little people-watching (which, at a show where many followed the "come as you were" theme, was good stuff) or you can drink it all in at the bar, with a pint or a stinger or whatever they drink across the Pond.

The crowd that made the scene that night ranged in age from early twenties to "none of your business" and filled the dance floor back to the outdoor patio. And, in case you thought you had to wait until you were inside for the invasion to begin, there was a bobby posted at the door, ready to handle any delinquent behavior... luckily, *the Kids were all right*. 🎵

For more on the RaveUps, go to www.theraveups.com. For more on the Sun Kings, log onto www.the-sun-kings.com and for more on the Hoo, visit www.thehoo.us. Check out the Uptown's calendar at www.uptownnightclub.com

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