

Deep Blue Sea "Strange Ways" album launch tour The Hope Tavern, Market Rasen



Sunday 29th September saw us taking the short jaunt from Hull over to Market Rasen for an afternoon of live music at The Hope Tavern "home of the blues in Lincolnshire", in the company of Deep Blue Sea.

What was to be an epic "Springsteen-esque" afternoon started with Iago Banet playing several songs on acoustic guitar from his recently released solo album, "A Sunset Wine".

Iago is both an extremely accomplished guitarist, and a laid back and funny guy. He received a warm reception from the intimate and packed house, all of whom responded to his toast of "Salud!" by doing exactly that. Glasses were raised. And again!

Iago was joined on stage by Amanda Dal and Graeme Wheatley, and they tore into a rousing version of IntroMental that set the tone for the afternoon.

And it got better and better: joined next by Dregas, with her stunning vocals, they launched into the single "Don't Say I Didn't Warn You"; a song which showcases blistering lead guitar work from Iago and a rhythm section you would be hard-pressed to better.

Graeme on bass brings a wealth of experience to the mix. He is a truly talented player and songwriter; the backbone of the band.

Finally, Amanda on drums is both a talented musician, and one of the happiest people on the circuit today. The drummer, who is second to none, seems never to stop smiling and brings a unique energy to the set.

Together, the group are a force to be reckoned with. Fusing retro sounds with modern twists, they take the audience on a journey that includes blues, rock, funk and folk; but is not limited by any of these labels. Deep Blue Sea take risks. Songs breathe and move into improvised "music of the moment" sections. I have seen the band several times and each experience is different. Each time, you get the feeling that anything can happen and they are all locked into that level of excitement and passion.

The three hours they played for us included old favourites such as "Black Diamond" and "Soho By Night", alongside the debut "Beast", which features an a-cappella chorus and a guitar solo that switches from slide to fingered in a frenzied storm of notes. And they played songs from the new album "Strange Ways", which, by this time next year, will include many 'favourites' judging by the length of the queue for CDs post-gig that night. I was knackered by the end of the evening, and so I'm guessing the band were too. Luckily, I was only going back to Hull. They were off to London to continue the album launch tour. If all the gigs are as impressive as this one, all I can say is that you need to see them, and soon.

A great venue and a great afternoon of top class music.

Vince Collins