

Throwing Woos

May 10, 2007

There are times when I plan ahead and there are times when I'm led by whim or chance, and last night was a perfect example of why the latter generally kicks so much more ass.

After a particularly sleepless night listening to helicopters and reassuring myself that although it smelled like it, my house was *not* burning down, I dragged myself to work and had a little verboten caffeine to clear any lingering soot from my lungs. An early text from a friend surprised me with the offer of free tickets to catch Kristin Hersh (she of gravelly voice and Throwing Muses fame) that evening at the El Rey.

I considered for a moment: Get car washed after the gym or go to rock show. My inner riot grrl wished she still had that pair of knockoff Doc Martens with the yellow shoelaces.

Later that evening, after a good, but not particularly special opening band, there was a brief intermission and when the curtain lifted, there sat a cellist and a violinist in front of a projection screen; I was fucking blown away. Not one minute into the opening song, I leaned over and whispered to my friend, "I'm buying that CD after the show." (I did.)

Scene after strange scene unfolded on the screen as the duo coaxed dark, spectacular sounds out of their instruments. My friend laughed, "You know, that just made me remember that the synthesizer is just imitating strings."

The duo didn't sing at all, but they didn't have to. It reminded me of a brief conversation I had with a friend some time back, where I said something that I truly, truly believe - that good music, for me, is where even if you don't listen to a single word that a person is singing, you can still hear what they *mean* in their performance, in the way they tango with their instrument, voice, very own body. They *feeeeeel* what they're doing and in turn, *you* feel it. You're in the band, you're on that stage, those strings and sticks are vibrating through your fingers, hands, arms, body...

I got the tingles. I sat there, slack-jawed, through the entire set, mesmerized. It's been so long since I've been transported, lifted out of my shoes at a show.

[The band is called **The McCarricks**, they're from London, and of course, they're on [MySpace](#)]

Another brief pause and Kristin took the stage. It took her three songs to gain her stride, but when she did, it was teen spirit in that piece. The way her eyes blaze when she hits her sweet spot is almost psychotic. That woman is wild. She knocked that shit out of the park and into the neighbor's yard.

Towards the end of the set, she stopped after a rather rowdy round of applause and said, "I like that you 'woo' - you know, they don't 'woo' in Europe...well, at least not for us." She paused as the 'woos' bellowed to the chandeliers. "You know, fuck 'em!!!....*they don't 'woo'!*..." The 'woos' went wild.

I 'woo-ed,' man. I 'woo-ed' like a wild animal, like I had no control over it, and my throat hurts today. As I do on nights like this, where the music transcends the stage, I took that 'woo' home and went to sleep with it, brushed my teeth next to it in the morning. I felt that 'woo' all day and that's exactly how it should be.