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## The Posies and Brendan Benson at The Bottom Lounge: Live review and photo gallery

Posted in [Audio File blog](#) by [Gavin Paul](#) on Nov 8, 2010 at 3:07pm



Photos: Dana Loftus

Early '90s power-pop nation all but invaded the Bottom Lounge Saturday night despite the fact that co-headliners **the Posies** were pulling heavily from their seventh LP, *Blood/Candy* (Rykodisc) in the set list—an album released in this decade. The Posies were cocksure with fists in the air attacking every chord crunch like the sludge of grunge was fixing to swallow their career whole again.

Frontman Ken Stringfellow energetically chased the specter of Seattle hype from his opening deadpan cryptic one liner from the Posies debut album, *Failure*, with his eyes on the back of the wall. "I've spent half my life in this God awful place," he told us, before leading a mass stage hop into one of several youthful attacks at their Washington upbringing. "Flavor of the Month," about a time when overnight flannel-clad successes blazed a commercial trail for acts from the region.

Of course the irony is that without the grunge aggression effect, The Posies would've never gone on to become the cult fave they are today, and its unlikely that co-founders Stringfellow and Jon Auer with their signature dark and soaring harmonies would be plucked to aid in Big Star reunions and R.E.M. tours.

The only other time Stringfellow decided to sling banter was to tell fans a tale of *Blood/Candy* (recorded in Spain) being the band's finest album to date. Otherwise, the band set itself to leading a pogo-worthy tour through its finest cuts, from the new folksy shades of "So Caroline" to another maturation project in the key-plunker balladry of "Licenses to Hide." Local songstress Laura Kurtz was called up on stage to fill in for Broken Social Scene's Lisa Lobsinger's sweet fills on that tune, with the whole crew cooing along with a set of fans already privy to the words, "When will you stop those adolescent trends?"

It was a tender teaser into fellow early '90s almost achiever's set. **Brendan Benson**, an Evan Dando-ish pinup type far more well known for his sideman work with The Raconteurs, despite his now four-album oeuvre as a heart-on-sleeve, quick-tongued songsmith with a populist ear for melody and a genuine mind for penning tales about failed love.

But like his co-headliners before him—Stringfellow and Auer are rounding out his stage presence throughout their tour together—he's still chasing respect with some great pop, like The Posies, pulling material heavily from his latest effort (Benson's is *My Old, Familiar Friend*). But Benson is also getting some hardcore lady swoons from the doo-wop tinged "Garbage Day," his curly locks shaking desperately at the part where he aches about sifting through garbage for a thrown-away heart.

The finest moment of the entire evening though was the tieback encore to a time before the early '90s that spawned all of these kids, a heel-kick rendition of Big Star's "September Gurls," coursing through Stringfellow and Auer's veins no doubt since their late career work with the band before Alex Chilton's passing, but fronted this time by Benson, a jangly reminder of an ode to the fact that that timeless pop moment is something that power-popsters forever chase—leaving a trail of some very fine tunes.

Video: [The Posies perform "Licenses to Hide" Live at TOC](#)

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