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It Happened Last Night

Lemonheads Revisit 'Ray' in Chicago

By Gavin Paul Giovagnoli on May 2, 2008 3:05 PM Comment



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Evan Dando of the Lemonheads / Photo by Laura Gray

Fallen alt-rock pinup Evan Dando put the shred on nostalgia last night (May 1) at Chicago's Abbey Pub as the Lemonheads' 1992 breakout album, It's a Shame About Ray, turns old enough to drive.

Donning a hooded sweatshirt, Dando opened curtain with a feedback-caked version of "Rockin' Stroll," gussying up the old album opener with a quicker tempo and a couple more right-clicks on the amp; however, the tune was still stuck in that early '90's time warp between grunge apathy and pop bliss, evoking a throwback evening straight out of a My So Called Life episode.

Of course the die-hard fans ate it up, reliving the shaggy opus track-by-track; "Bit Part," as well as the album's title track, saw the mic turned over to the crowd come chorus time, a pit of 30-year-old adults bouncing back to their carefree youths.

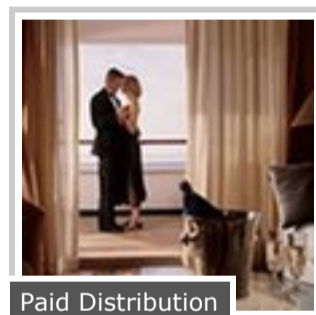
Around track eight, "Hanna & Gabi," Dando's bass and drum cohorts left the performance to the frontman. Whereas his power trio was killing all the alt-country twang and Replacements-era punk subtleties that made It's a Shame... such a classic, Dando flashed his singer/songwriter side, commanding himself like a young Bruce Springsteen. And later, "Frank Mills," the first sway from It's a Shame..., and a shoegazing cover of Misfits thrasher "Skulls," showed promise of a second coming for Dando and crew.

But notably absent was that little post-release B-side by Atlantic, "Mrs. Robinson," a classic cover tune that Dando has been known to despise. A overheard fan offered his two-cents: "I don't know honey, maybe Paul Simon said if they ever play 'Mrs. Robinson' again, he'll kill them."



Topics: Gavin Paul Giovagnoli, It Happened Last Night

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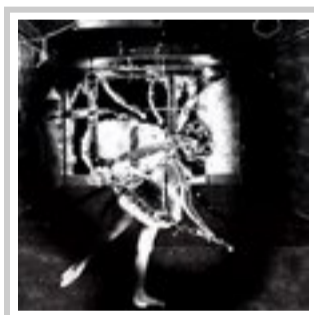
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