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It Happened Last Night

Son Ambulance Rescue Pop In Chicago

By Gavin Paul Giovagnoli on July 16, 2008 3:07 PM Comment



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Jeff Koster and Jenna Morrison / Photo by Laura Gray

Vicarious experiences abound last night (July 15) in the candle-lit halls of Chicago's Schubas, as Omaha's psych-pop set, Son Ambulance, wafted out gems from Someone Else's Déjà Vu, released last week.

Never ones to truly anchor themselves to one genre, the Saddle Creek six-piece whirled through week-fresh tales off their third LP, flirting with golden-era soul, Simon & Garfunkel folk and Latin flare like they were putting on all hats, until lead singer Joe Knapp gave the cue to turn on the pop-bliss sirens.

Unfortunately, a set of soft-cheer grazers at the outset kept the room library-quiet as they kicked off with "Juliet's Son," even with Knapp's lyrical quip about ignoring pop charts. It took some flirts of sax and Knapp's inner- Robert Smith on a track from '04's Key, the appropriately titled "Pleasure Now," before the band made some friends with audience members' feet, Knapp asserting, "I will do something to make you happy."

From there they hit their stride, teasing ears with samba trickles on "Quand Tu Marches Seul," before crescendoing into waves of synth and Korg blurs. Or finding knee-slapping Western-saloon vibes on "Awakening," only to part its clouds with lofty Beach Boys harmonies; all to be capped with the saving grace closer, "Yesterday Morning," Knapp assuring the crowd, "This is every letter I never wrote/It's every dream I've never told."

We Asked: Joe Knapp named Son Ambulance in order of his life priorities – his child, and then his band. If you could title your life in two words, what would they be?

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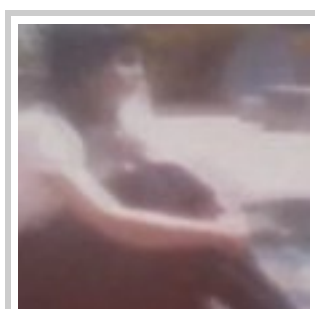
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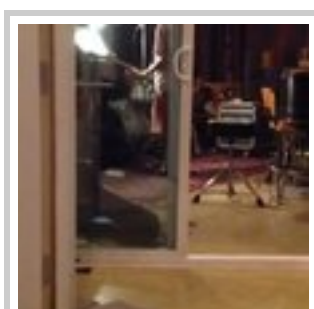
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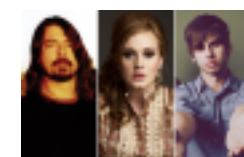


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