

Day 13 - MC Hansen & The Sentimentals & Friends

The Sundown Concert on Tuesday June 4, was listed in the programme as MC Hansen & The Sentimentals & Friends. On his opening evening, 2012 Kerrville main-stage debut Matt Harlan's band had included Hansen, and over the ensuing year the & Friends plan was hatched. When solo American songwriters tour Scandinavia, they're regularly supported by MC Hansen (lead electric guitar, vocals) & The Sentimentals—namely, Nikolaj Wolf (upright bass) and Jacob Chano (drums, percussion). The plan being to replicate on the Threadgill stage, what occurs onstage in European venues. Here's what happened...

Hansen & Co. launched the proceedings with his *Baby Blue* and partway through MC requested that Matt Harlan (vocals, acoustic guitar) join him. Together they finished the song, and Houston based Harlan then introduced his 'musical and now matrimonial' partner Rachel Jones (vocals). Matt's sophomore release *BOW AND BE SIMPLE* (2012) was recorded in Denmark with The Sentimentals, and from that collection he delivered *Darker Shade Of Grey*, *Too Much Going On*, and closed with the title song. Following Harlan and Jones' departure, MC introduced long-time festival favourite Dana Cooper (vocals, acoustic guitar). Recalling one writing assignment while on a songwriting retreat, Dana began with *No Second Comin*—'This is one of my religious songs that I'm so well known for'—and followed with the heartfelt *Right The Wrong* penned after a 2012 visit to Belfast, Ireland. 'It's a sad, beautiful place filled with people who have all been wounded, directly or indirectly, or have had a loved one killed.' From his most recent studio recording *THE CONJURER* (2010), the Independence, Missouri bred musician closed with *Enough* which he co-wrote with Kim Carnes.

Chelsea, New York based 2013 New Folk winner Ed Romanoff (vocals, acoustic guitar) was a surprise addition, and accompanied by MC & Co. performed *The Ballad Of Willie Sutton* and *Little Less*



MC Hansen & The Sentimentals & Friends - Tuesday 4th June 2013: L. to R. Jonathan Byrd (vocals, acoustic guitar) and MC Hansen (electric guitar)

Broken. Next up, currently residing in Brooklyn, New York, Ana Egge (vocals, acoustic guitar) opened with *Hole In Your Halo*, a song inspired by her experiences in dealing with the self-destructive impulses of family members. *Halo* appeared on her Steve Earle produced *BAD BLOOD* (2011), from which she also aired *Motorcycle* and *Shadow Fall*. Called to the stage, 2003 New Folk winner Jonathan Byrd (vocals, acoustic guitar) was met with a wave of rapturous applause. Byrd, joined by Egge, performed *We Used To Be Birds* as a duet. The song opens *THE BARN BIRDS*, the recently released duo album by Byrd and Oregon based musician Chris Kokesh. Byrd's *I Was An Oak Tree* from *CACKALACK* (2010)—'That's just short for Cackalacky, which means Carolina. I'm from North Cackalacky'—was followed by *The Law & The Lonesome* from his 2008 album of the same name.

MC had opened with one of his compositions, now it was time to loosen things up. Hansen & Co. were then joined by Egge, Byrd and Harlan (acoustic guitar) for MC's *Sail The River To The Sea* replete with a six-string solo from the Houston musician. Recalling the occasion when Byrd urged him to pen 'a song about poultry,' MC confirmed that *Neighbourhood* was the result. To performing it the Scandinavians were joined by Cooper (harmonica), plus Egge (guitar), Byrd (guitar) and Harlan (guitar). In performance, as well as Wolf's bass solo, the three guest guitarists also delivered solos. Moving on, Byrd sang *Can't Outrun The Radio*—'a song about submitting to a power greater than yourself'—and, closing *& Friends*, Egge took the lead vocal on her, yet-to-be-recorded, Gary Nicholson co-write *Rock Me*. It was time to hoot and holler and display some appreciation... **Arthur Wood**

2013 Wildflower!

Arts & Music Festival

Three Nights, Three Headliners

Friday May 17 - Eliza Gilkyson

During his intro singer-songwriter festival stage manager Al Johnson mentioned that a decade ago Eliza had been elected to Austin's Music Hall of Fame, her take being: 'You just have to be old.' A Wildflower! Festival stage regular, on this occasion, Gilkyson was accompanied by son Cisco Ryder (drums, cajon, percussion) and Mike Hardwick (electric guitar, Dobro). Prior to her opening number, when a fan, obviously well-known to Eliza, requested *Mamma's Got A New Boyfriend* she retorted: 'You're like a broken record.' *Blue Moon Night* followed.

In recent times the influx of well-paid, former West Coast techies has made living in North Austin expensive, resulting in Gilkyson's move to the Emerald Forest sub-division south of the river. As for 'the beautiful Forest,' Eliza explained: 'It's not,' nevertheless employing a neat link to *Emerald Street*, a song in which she proves irrevocably girls can whistle! Urging audience members to partake, Eliza's skilful (whistling) gymnastics far outstripped their efforts. *Roses At The End Of Time*, the title song from her current Red House Records album, was followed by brother Tony's composition *Death In Arkansas*, and her own *Rare Bird*.

Announcing that she'd postponed release of her new album *THE NOCTURNE DIARIES* till early 2014, Eliza delivered the aside: 'These are songs written in the middle of the night,' and assisted vocally by Cisco, debuted the gospel flavoured *Touchstone*. A rendition of *Beauty Way* was followed by the audience request *Greenfields*. Penned by her late father Terry, for his wife, Eliza recalled an occasion when she enquired about the song's meaning. Her father's reply: 'Stop looking for hidden meanings in everything.' Having performed *On The Borderline*, the audience request *Separated* saw Cisco play cajon. Having asked the audience to whistle, plus they'd clapped their way through her up-tempo songs, Eliza broke into *Slouching Toward Bethlehem* with an invitation to sing on

PICKIN' & GRINNIN'

her final number, one that featured a Hardwick slide guitar solo.

Saturday May 18 - Slaid Cleaves

Slaid's latest Richardson festival appearance came at the end of an almost 12-hour day, with sets from Parker Millsap, Joe Crookston, Don Henry, Sally Barris and Amy Speace. The Mainer was accompanied throughout by Scrappy Jud Newcomb (electric guitars, support and lead vocal), the producer of Cleaves' latest release *STILL FIGHTING THE WAR*. *Broke Down* and *Horseshoe Lounge* were followed by *Drinkin' Days*, Slaid (vocal, acoustic guitar) having constructed the latter lyric from a series of catchphrases by friend Ron Coy aka Wranglin' Ron.

It's appropriate that the title song, *Still Fighting The War*, was Cleaves' first new album selection, since Coy co-wrote it. Slaid noted that it was National Armed Forces Day and that the veterans charity Operation Homefront, was selling pre-release downloads of the song. Following *Green Mountains & Me*, Slaid delved further into his new album with renditions of *Without Her* and *Whim Of Iron*, the latter lyric inspired by his grandfather, a straight-laced businessman, and Prudence, a wayward actress aunt. During his *Rust Belt Fields* introduction, co-written with school friend Rod Picott, Cleaves mentioned *THE BRIDGE* compilation—reviewed in this issue—which Picott had compiled as a benefit for the Boston youth shelter charity, *Bridge Over Troubled Waters*. Predictably *Texas Love Song* was enthusiastically received by the mostly home state audience, and the vocally complex *God's Own Yodeller* followed, a tribute to Slaid's late mentor Don Walser. From *WISHBONES* the amusing *Horses And Divorces*, inspired by fellow Mainer Willy John (a gregarious friend of Cleaves' father), was followed by a bluesy tune on which Scrappy Jud Newcomb sang and played slide guitar, and Slaid closed his headlining set with *Cry* and *One Good Year*.

Sunday May 19 - Terri Hendrix

Terri (vocals, acoustic guitar, papoose, mandolin, harmonica) was accompanied on her late Sunday afternoon festival set by long-time mentor, co-writer and producer Lloyd Maines (acoustic guitar, Dobro, support vocals). Lloyd was fresh from a three-hour long Austin City Limits

Eliza Gilkyson - Friday 17th May 2013

tribute concert at Austin's Moody Theatre, having celebrated there his almost five-decade professional music career, with appearances by daughter Natalie, The Dixie Chicks, Bruce Robison and Kelly Willis, Joe Ely, Terry Allen and more. Over the course of Austin City Limits' 39-year run, to date, the Lubbock bred music legend has logged more appearances than anyone.

San Antonio bred Terri opened with *Acre Of Land*, her tribute to husbanding the land, from *THE SPIRITUAL KIND*. In fact four songs from her 2007 album appeared in her Wildflower! set. From her sophomore *WILORY FARM* (1998) *Wallet*, replete with harp solo, was followed by the Mary Ann Kennedy/Pam Rose co-write *Love Like This*. Penned with Maines—'he's a blessing in my life'—*1000 Times* from *CRY TILL YOU LAUGH* (2010), was followed by the Woody Guthrie compositions *Car, Car* (*CELEBRATE THE DIFFERENCE* (2005)), *Pastures Of Plenty* (*THE SPIRITUAL KIND*), and the Billy Bragg co-write *Way Over Yonder In The Minor Key* which she has yet to record and release. Hendrix's involvement in Jimmy LaFave's current Guthrie tribute performance piece *WALKING WOODY'S ROAD* should explain the inclusion of the latter trio of songs.

Terri's third *THE SPIRITUAL KIND* selection proved to be the title tune, followed by *The Ring*, a song inspired by the band her father fashioned for Terri's mother from a silver half-dollar. Her energetic set continued with a pair of 'yet to be recorded' tunes. *My Feet's Too Big*, penned by Fred Fisher/Ada Benson, proved to be a humorous affair, and was followed by Elder Roma Wilson's bluesy *Ain't It A Shame* featuring another harp solo. The final selection from *THE SPIRITUAL KIND* was the tender and heartfelt *If I Had A Daughter* and, inviting Al, the members of 2-Bit Palomino and Kate Hearne to the stage to add their voices, Terri closed with *Hole In My Pocket*. A Hendrix observer for over 15 years, Terri's performance remains high-energy, while her song choices and stage presence confirm an ever increasing maturity. **Arthur Wood**



Beverley Folk Festival

June 21-23, 2013

This review would have been done a lot sooner if I hadn't spent the last three days listening to *Warriors* by Coco and the Butterfields on loop. It's one of those songs that you listen to so much you end up hating it. And, to be fair, were it not for their knock-out performance at this year's Beverley Folk Festival, I wouldn't have given them the time of day. And maybe I'll tire of them soon enough. But sometimes a band is just the ultimate festival band. I wish I could say it was someone like Gretchen Peters or Show Of Hands that I loved the most, but it was this quirky and slightly irritating and oh-so-young five-piece from Canterbury. With a beat-boxer, banjo player, fiddler-cum-vocalist (and such vocals) and double bass, the band electrified the Concert Tent on the Saturday with their self-named genre of fip fok. They were musically tight, lots of fun and, well, just completely different. They were followed by the very charming Young 'Uns, a Teeside trio of chaps singing of the shipyards in between banter of the very highest quality.

But this was Saturday. Friday night was dominated by the Scots. If you listened very carefully (or if you pitched your tent just outside the festival village so you could nip back in between songs) you could hear a veritable Scottish battle between the mighty Proclaimers in the main tent and Lincs-based Scots Something Nasty In The Woodshed in the concert tent. The Celtic energy fizzing from both tents was enough to start the whole weekend in fantastic style. Both gigs (yes I was at both at once) were fabulous and I'm glad I didn't have to choose. Supporting the Proclaimers was the ever-melodic Edwina Hayes, whose honeyed voice put revellers in the perfect laid-back and happy mood.

This was the festival's first time at its new site at Beverley Racecourse. Despite it being one of the loveliest festivals on