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December 15, 2006

Carried Away on Pinstripes & Jazz

He's bringing sexy back ... and all the crooners don't know how to act ...

I was underdressed. Let's just throw that fact out there for everyone to know. I was underdressed.

I threw on, what I thought, were my best pair of jeans, a nice button up shirt and to top it all of, my favorite hat, a pinstripe, navy blue, Boston Red Sox hat. Not that I like the Red Sox ... or even baseball for that matter, but the hat is very nice.

Now, I knew Matt Dusk was going to dress up with his ever-so stylish suit, vest, shirt, tie, pants and shoes, almost all of which are designed by local image consultant Damon Allon.

Let's also mention first that this was my first jazz show. I know nothing about jazz the way I know facts and procedures about the hardcore, screamo genre. I just love the way that jazz carries me away.

So, I walk casually into the Hamilton Place, look around and see cocktail dresses, suits and ... no jeans. No hats and ... thankfully, I saw button up shirts. But I didn't care, I just wanted to watch a jazz show, not try to outdress the 70 year old beside me.

Dione Taylor opened for Matt Dusk. Her band walked onto stage, took their place, picked up their instruments (except for the pianist, he didn't pick up his instrument) and started playing a light tune. Dione walked onto stage a few seconds after to scattered claps. She introduced herself, thankful to be playing in Hamilton and with Matt Dusk, and dived right into a tune from her first album.

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I was told, yesterday morning, to watch out for Dione because a lot of people have placed her into different genres. Some in gospel, maybe in blues, a little in jazz, and some in pop. Even the booklet handed out at the concert described her as gospel and jazz ... to me, that is a weird mix of genres ... or maybe it isn't, I don't know.

I can tell you that Dione Taylor and her band are all jazz! The pianist was fantastic, with scattered solos and loud riffs in the middle of songs, the band did an excellent job of accompanying Dione's beautiful voice that is able to hit notes in all different ranges. With a beautiful jazz-rendered tune that Prince wrote to a catchy, jazz-infused rendition of Oh Holy Night, Dione and her band made sure everyone had a great time.

After Dione's set there was an 'intermission.' I sat in my seat for the intermission and subtly listened in to the conversation beside me to attempt to understand the jazz lifestyle and views that people have. Unfortunately, for my dad and I, I think we were sitting beside the 'best friend' of everyone in the jazz world. This guy was name-dropping left, right and center! My dad and I just wanted to pop his little ego bubble by leaning over and saying, "You know ... it's great that you had lunch with Dione Taylor, but do you know that I was in the Capitol studios when Frank Sinatra recorded his greatest album ever? Yup ... it is true ... well, have a good night."

Oh to see the look on his face. Oh well ...

Thankfully, the lights settled down and he shut his mouth ... only to inform everyone around him, as if we cared, that he would get to meet Matt Dusk. Urgh.

To first describe to you the talent of the band behind Matt Dusk, let me say that if Matt Dusk were to remain backstage the whole concert and would have let his band play a concert, I would have not complained. They were fantastic. The bassist, with a 6 string bass and a stand-up bass was phenomenal. He was up and down that bass like a construction worker on a ladder. The pianist, sitting at a grand piano, was equally great. During one bass solo, the pianist reached his arms into the piano and started plucking the strings of the piano as if it were a harp, absolutely amazing. The guitarist provided the perfect back-up riffs and the loud, jazzy solos that can carry you away. The drummer was so animated and lively when he played, I wouldn't have

given a care in the world if he just played for a whole concert. The most unique piece of the band for me was the tenor saxophonist. I have never seen a saxophonist live and it blew me away. I fell in love with the sounds that he worked out of his worn-out sax.

But for all those critics who want to claim Matt Dusk as a Micheal Buble, Frank Sinatra knock-off, I have to disagree. I have found that, in my short-lived love for jazz, a lot of jazz has the same sound if listened to for a long period of time ... or, if you don't take the time to listen to the seperate parts of the band and how the singer uses his voice, all jazz will sound the same. So, for those unfortunate beings who don't take the time to look at the differences behind each singer, then their views will remain as naive as ever.

Matt Dusk credits his love of jazz to Harry Connick Jr (pat yourself on the back and call yourself naive and narrowminded if you think he is yet another Frank Sinatra knock-off)

Matt has great stage presence, always dancing and snapping his fingers when he's not singing and when he is singing, his facial expressions and body posture only enhance the meaning behind the lyrics. If he is sitting on a stool, leaning against the piano or in a slouched stance, he makes sure that the meaning and emotion of his music is understood by the crowd.

Between every 2 or 3 songs he would tell a story of his time in Hamilton or on the road.

During one such chat with the crowd he told us of how he has been reading the papers in the last few days and has read some reviews comparing him to yet another Micheal Buble, Il Divo, Frank Sinatra knock-off. He chuckled and said that he viewed himself more of a "Justin Timberlake knock-off", he laughs again and starts singing

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He's funny, that Matt Dusk.

Aside from his jokes, the Matt Dusk concert was phenomenal. I recommend seeing Matt Dusk if you ever receive the chance.

Check out the blog on Monday for reviews and pictures on (maybe) 2 concerts, one concert guaranteed! Be sure to come

out to the YMCA in Burlington tonight (prior blog) to see bands such as Foxfight and the Stanford Accent.

Until next time,

Jason Matos

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(for a preview of the Matt Dusk concert, flip over to Leonard Turnevicius' blog for an entry for earlier this week; for an interview and cd review for dione taylor, see his entry for Nov. 11)

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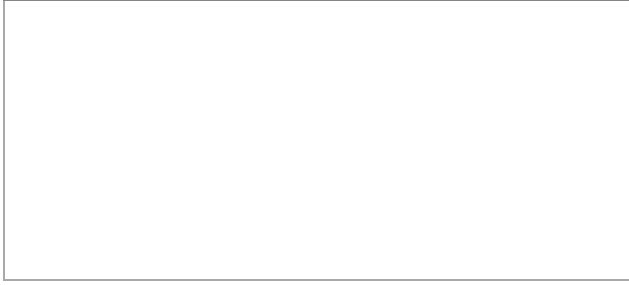
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