DYLAN AND KNOPFLER

Posted on November 20, 2011 by Eddie

Category: Reviews

Yesterday evening, Sue and I headed down to the Hammersmith Apollo with our friend, Bev, to see Mark Knopfler and Bob Dylan in concert.

The evening kicked off with a set of about an hour and a quarter from Knopfler and band. Almost all of the songs were unfamiliar to me, but that didn't deminish the set in the slightest - it was stunning. I know that Knopfler isn't everyone's cup of tea, but from the first time I heard Sultans of Swing thirty something years ago, I've been in awe ofÂ his guitar style. I reckon that he is at his best when he plays *folky* style songs rather than Dire Straits type rock and last night we got a lot of folk-inspired music. I have no idea who the flautist was, but he was outstanding! At times he sounded rather Ian Anderson, though without the tedious standing around on one leg, at others he combined magically with the fiddle player to produce a wonderful counterpoint to the rest of the band. Great stuff!

The only downside was that Knopfler is a rather taciturn performer, I don't think he spoke more than two sentences to the audience all evening. He didn't even introduce the band - or if he did, I missed it.

Dylan did, at least, introduce the band, but his diction was so unclear that I've got no idea what their names were nor, in a couple of cases, what instruments they were playing. His set was loud and heavy, blistering rock and roll with a country/folk feel. It wasn't quite what I expected when we paid (through the nose) for the tickets. Because the song arrangements were very unfamiliar and Bob's voice is not as clear as it might be, it was difficult to recognise some of the songs immediately. It wasn't until he got to the chorus that I realised that he was singing 'A hard rain...'. It isn't that the songs weren't good, they were brilliant, but they didn't sound familiar even when they were.

Overall, I enjoyed Mark Knopfler's set the most, though the best individual song of the evening was Dylan's 'Like a Rolling Stone'.

It was a good evening; only slightly spoiled by the fact that we had standing tickets as did a lot of tall people, many of whom stood directly in front of us. For much of the evening I had a great view of the back of someone's neck and not much else.