



Feeling pressured or disrespected? SEND A CALLOUT CARD And draw your digital line.

THATSNOTCOOL.COM



RAPID CITY JOURNAL.COM ONLINE EXCLUSIVE

FEEDBACK & DISTORTION by Journal Staff

- Feedback and Distortion

Public Enemy and Boyz II Men One of the best dates I've ever

had

By Ruth Milne

James Van Nuys, a true Renaissance man who has conquered all the arts, and Bob Fahey, a local musician not as familiar with, collaborated to present an acoustic blues concert, "A Date with the Blues," last night at the Elks Theatre.

I went alone, but "A Date with the Blues" was one of the best dates I've ever had.

Amid a thicket of microphones, the two musicians played to a packed house. Look at all these people. How many relatives do you have, Bob? asked Van Nuys.

The banter continued throughout the night, with the two making fun of each other between and even during songs. You call that a blues lick?

In fine blues tradition, there were toe-tapping songs about dust and highways and railroads, songs of loss and travel with great lyrics like "That train done gone." They even did the old standard "Sixteen Tons," that gloomy coal mining ballad that has incongruously been co-opted by a GE commercial in a push to make mining seem sexy.

One song was a singalong; the women in the audience were asked to join in for the line "We need to talk" in a song about a woman pestering her man in the middle of the night to have "a talk."

The song's high point was a guitar solo by Fahey, during which he made the instrument twang and chirp and whine and nag. Genuinely nag. His guitar talked back, people. And man, it was one unpleasant woman.

It was about as good-natured as misoqyn gets, I suppose.



Bob Fahey and some fine-looking guitars.



Dr. Emmett Brown... I mean, James Van Nuys, tunes his guitar

James Van Nuys has cut his hair since the last time I saw him. I don't remember when it was, but I recall thinking he looked like a mad scientist, and not the Einstein kind, but the kind who would build a flying DeLorean.

Van Nuys and Fahey played together for the first half of the show, and after a short intermission (when I took these photos) they were joined by two very special guests for the second half.

Wearing hideous red shoes, local urologist and all-around character Will Waller played piano and sang "The Thrill Is Gone." His Southern accent and rich growl did the song justice. He also did an original about a really bad dancer from Fargo, N.D., as well as a cover of one of my personal favorites, Otis Redding's "Sitting on the Dock of the Bay."

Kenny Putnam, dapper as always, joined with fiddling that lent itself well to a country song that Fahey wrote. He blended nicely with the blues numbers too, and it was pretty rockin' at times — imagine Peter Frampton playing violin.

"Stormy Monday" was introduced as the blues national anthem — one of those songs that just has to be played at a blues show, just like "Free Bird" has to be played at a classic rock show. Waller came up onstage to sing this one at the microphone, but halfway through it he stopped, declared he couldn't stand it, he had to play. He trotted back to the piano to finish the song.

It wasn't all old-school Mississippi-style blues; there were some unexpected numbers as well, including a fantastic cover of the Doors' "LA Woman."

The show concluded with a song Van Nuys wrote for sobriety challenged people who pester him when he plays in bars, the sort of people who play air guitar and sing "Free Bird" without knowing all the lyrics. The mock-tender song was a riot, with witty lines like "It's just another day you didn't seize" and "Things look so much better when you're blind."

Then the four musicians jammed for a few minutes and played a bit of Free Bird, to much audience amusement.

This entry was posted on Friday, January 19th, 2007 at 3:48 pm and is filed under local music. You can follow any responses to this entry through the RSS 2.0 feed. You can leave a response, or trackback from your own site.

Staff Bloggers

- Mount Blogmore
Black Hills Business Blog
Shouting from the Sidelines
Feedback and Distortion
Take It Outside
What's For Dinner?
A Wide(r) Angle
Sturgis blog
Higher Source
Citizen Critic
High and Tight
Copy

Community Bloggers

- Art: Artbusters
Running: Run Don't Blog
Seniors: Life Past 65
Paranormal: The Other Side
Indigenous P.O.V.
The Wine Nose

- Investing: Money Talks
Piano: Piano Lady
Wild Moms

Pages

Guidelines for comments

Archives

- September 2009
August 2009
July 2009
June 2009
May 2009
April 2009
March 2009
February 2009
January 2009
December 2008
November 2008
October 2008
September 2008
August 2008
July 2008
June 2008
May 2008
April 2008
March 2008
February 2008
January 2008
December 2007
November 2007
October 2007
September 2007
August 2007
July 2007
June 2007
May 2007
April 2007
March 2007
February 2007
January 2007
December 2006
November 2006
October 2006

Search

Search input field with Search button

Categories

- Above the Din columns (3)
Acoustic