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Saturday, October 26th, 2013 – An Austin Invasion of Dallas

This night turned out to be far less ideal than expected, at least in terms of the weather, when the rain began pouring from the clouds in the suburbs north of Dallas, as they gradually made their way to the city itself.

It suddenly turned into the perfect night to stay in the warm confines of a house, but Texas Music Live (which is part of Texas Music Magazine) had put together a little Texas tour of three Austin based acts, one of whom was Quiet Company. It had been five months since I had last seen them, and it was going to take a little more than heavy rain to keep me away from the show, which was stopping at the big room of The Prophet Bar on its fourth night.

Luke Huch was the opening act, though it was a full band performance, and one I missed just about all of, because they evidently got off to a very early start.

The first band who was on this tour was The Reynolds Number, didn't waste time getting their gear set up, and after a quick sound check, they were ready to go.

"...We drove a long way to be here..." joked singer and pianist Om Shankar, noting it was all of about a three hour drive. He went on to encourage everyone to get closer to the stage, saying something to the effect of wanting to hang out with everybody, though the way he phrased it he should have said "hung", leading to a humorous as he pondered on the past and present tenses of the word.

It's always good to start with a joke, even if it's one that happens unintentionally, and they then started their first song, the lead track from their newly released self-titled record, "Follow You". It was clear from the

get go that their set was going to be something to soak in, their catchy brand of piano driven rock immediately captivating you, while Om started the first line of the song, “In this town where we sleep and our bodies come to rest, someday it all will end...”.

There weren't too many people there, but they had seemed to capture the interest of most who were there, and as the quintet wound things into their next track, they slowed it down, as Om mentioned this was their first time to play Dallas, looking at bassist Gabriel Elpers and guitarist Josh Atkins for confirmation on that. “What was that place we ate at?” he asked them, before remembering it was the Angry Dog, a staple restaurant in the Deep Ellum area, and one he seemed to have enjoyed.

They then moved on to the subsequent song on their new record, “Awake”, which eventually bled in to one of, if not the best song they did this night, “Cover Your Bones”. That latter song just had a different quality to it than the others, at least in the live environment, even having a strong sense of urgency to it at times, in a very good way.

Along with the current music, The Reynolds Number also threw in a couple of new songs they've written, one of which was “How Quick”, and it was another standout. “This one's brand new. No one's ever heard it, not even us.” Om joked before starting it.

Their show hit a well placed lull after that, guitarists Colin Campbell and Josh, as well as Gabriel and drummer Mack Arnos getting a little break for the majority of the piano based, “Prophet”. They sprang back into action afterwards, though, segueing the song right into the slightly poppy, “All Fall Down”. They knocked out one more new one, I believe it was titled “Diamond Days”, and upon finishing it Om pointed out their merch table at the back. “...It's next to Quiet Company's beautiful display... They took arts and crafts in school, and we didn't...” he added, before Gabriel shook his head, saying, “I did.”

As their 38-minute long set neared its end, things got a little personal when Om stated this next song was about he and his dad going camping when he was younger, at least that was what he said to set up “Down to the Riverbed”. Their final song was another brilliant one, and best of all was the help they enlisted towards the end of it, when a few of the members of Quiet Company joined them on stage, adding some extra percussion to the song

via some toms. Making it all the more entertaining was the fact that Matt Parmenter was wearing a Darth Vader mask.

They somehow managed to liven things up even more than what The Reynolds Number already had, making that song the perfect one to close with, and they even got a portion of the audience to chant along with part of the song. I'll admit, I'm not usually a fan of rock bands that rely so heavily on a piano, mainly because I feel it was overdone in years past when that was the "phase" in much of the mainstream music. That said, The Reynolds Number was different than most other bands in that category.

There was nothing about them that was generic, and they even put a bit of an interesting spin on their rock songs. They made me a fan with ease, from the well-crafted songs, which incorporated all of the instruments quite well, to Oms' rather angelic sounding voice. Well, that, and also the energy Josh, Colin, Mack and Gabriel put on, all of whom could throw down and rock out.

They were just one of the bands of the night who has talent that, in a just world, will one day have them performing in a much bigger venue (and to a lot more people) than where they were this night. And hopefully that'll happen one day.

In the meantime, you can purchase their music over on their [BANDCAMP PAGE](#) or in [iTUNES](#). You can even download a live cut of one of their songs for [FREE](#) on the Bandcamp site. And for future show updates, keep an eye on their [FACEBOOK PAGE](#).

They definitely got the ball rolling on this night of music, and if I hadn't already been all too familiar with [Quiet Company](#), I would have thought it was next to impossible for The Reynolds Number to be topped.

"...This spaced out stuff isn't going to work..." Taylor Muse informed the audience once the sound check was complete. He urged everyone to gather in around the stage, saying, "Or I'll punch you all in the gut...", if they didn't, to which a fan of theirs could be heard remarking, "He'll do it."

Things looked slightly different from what they had at the past Quiet Company shows I've seen, mainly because of the acoustic guitar Taylor was using. It did look foreign compared to what I'm used to, though it was a

crucial part of their first song, which was either a cover or one of the few new ones they tried out this night. That was the only time that acoustic got used this night, though, and while he switched out to an electric, Matt Parmenter, who was apparently getting into the Halloween spirit a little early, donned his Darth Vader helmet. The funny thing was before they began their show the actual helmet part got detached from face mask part, and without the helmet, it did look a little strange.

“Tell a joke!” someone shouted before they were able to get the next song going. “...I used to tell jokes on stage... But then everyone else banned me from it...” replied Taylor, still managing to crack a joke. The sample track for “It’s Better to Spend Money Like There’s No Tomorrow Than Spend Tonight Like There’s No Money” then faded in, bringing with it its signature infectiously happy mood, and it’s one song that really provokes the urge to dance. During the break in the song, when guitarist and multi-instrumentalist Thomas Blank is doing his melodic solo, Taylor made things a little more fun. “...National songwriting treasure...” was the set of words he used to describe Will Smith, before busting out a portion of the theme song to *The Fresh Prince of Bel Air*. That unexpected song within a song had much of the crowd singing along, sort of laughing while doing so, and I must say, Taylor could actually rap rather well. In all, it only lasted for a few lines, before they closed out their song, Taylor singing/screaming, “...We all end up... in the cemetery.”

Next up, they had a new song for everyone. “...You better enjoy them, or I’ll punch ya in the gut.” was another idle threat Taylor made. It was a good little song, being a bit different from most of the stuff from 2010’s “We Are All Where We Belong”, even sounding kinda slow at times. It was enjoyable, though, particularly the keyboard intro that Cody Ackors was in charge of at the start.

“I’d kill... At least a drifter for some water.” Taylor remarked after the applause had subsided, bantering with the audience a little longer before they launched into their next song. The drum stick he was clutching was a sign as to what it would be, using it to play his guitar for part of what is arguably one of the deepest songs you’ll find on “WAAWWB”, “Everything Louder Than Everything Else”. The fans were clearly feeling the songs passion, too, as most sang along to every word. They were also singing along to “You, Me, and the Boatman”, which they went directly into, drummer Jeff Weathers patching them into it with the steady beat of the

songs verse.

Taylor suddenly ceased singing on one line, leaving the fans to weakly, yet audibly chant, "...Everybody knows what it looks like to be in love...". They kept the string of songs going by transitioning into some soft percussion, Cody switching from his trombone to the additional tom, striking the rim of it, while Matt, Thomas and Taylor all clapped along to Jeff's beats, getting the audience to do the same. Everyone seemed pleased to hear "On Modern Men", another moving song with some powerful lyrics, and since I had last seen them, they had tweaked the outro a bit. Taylor got a solo of sorts, leaning over while his guitar hung in the air as he shredded on it, progressively getting faster, before his band mates matched the intensity as they brought it to a spectacular end.

They took a break after finishing it, and Taylor gave the obligatory merch speech all bands have to make, though it was different from most that I've heard before. He went into a lengthy conversation about how buying one shirt is the equivalent of four thousand and something plays on Spotify, joking that no matter how much you liked a song, after a few hundred listens you'd be pretty tired of it. "...So isn't it just easier to buy a shirt?" he asked, also mentioning at one point that he was talking just to catch his breath.

They knocked out one more new one, a fairly fast paced tune that was Quiet Company at their best (or at least another example of it), with one of the lines being, "...My heart is pumping dust...". As the music trailed off, Cody again took to the tom, while the rest of the band played some soft, and at times soupy notes, creating a truly perfect segue. The thing was, while I had an idea as to what the song was, until they switched gears and Taylor strummed his guitar, giving shape to "Preaching to the Choir Invisible, Part I (What do You Think Happens When We Die?)". The fans again took part in clapping to the beat during the first section of the song, until it picked up.

It's a wonderful note to end on, somewhat repeating what is essentially the mantra from the record, "We are all where we belong.", and during the final minute of their 47-minute long set, Taylor grabbed the microphone stand, holding it above everyone's heads, leaving the crowd to croon, "Ooooooh." repeatedly.

That's one of the best things about Quiet Company, they make sure the fans are a part of the show, not just spectators to the event.

Aside from that, it's the more unique style of rock music they play (how many rock bands have you seen that use a trombone?), mixed with the honest, bone cutting lyrics. And then you have the fact that their live show is one of the most explosive and dynamic ones you can see, and they all leave everything out on the stage. T

here's a reason why within the past year they decided to become a full-time touring band, and if you see them, you'll understand it.

Depending on your preference, you can buy their music on either iTUNES or BANDCAMP, and on their Bandcamp store you can even download a little sampler for FREE.

Rounding out the night was the longtime running Austin band Alpha Rev. They have a pretty dedicated fan base around here, and even elsewhere, but when I've listened to their music in the past, I was never won over as a fan, and I was curious as to if their live show might do the trick.

The band descended from the staircase around 11:25, taking their spots, as they prepared to start their 64-minute long set.

It was "Bloom" (which was released earlier in the year) that seemed to be the main focus of their set this night, and four of the five members, singer and acoustic guitarist Casey McPherson, keyboard player Jeff Bryant, drummer Clint Simmons and bassist Nick Jay all crooned into their respective mics, stretching out the intro of "Crystal Colorado"... A little too long if you ask me.

Once they finished it, Jeff slid over to the pedal steel guitar, while Casey took over the keys for "Highways", before switching back to the acoustic axe near the end, as it got a little more catchy than it had been. They kept on moving through their setlist, doing a couple of other songs before getting to "Stop Trying". "...This song's about wanting to give up..." Casey informed the crowd, joking that he got pretty creative with the title.

"I Will Come" created more of an ominous, and even dark mood, before casting some light on with "New Morning". Afterwards, they were joined on stage by Taylor Muse, who again had his acoustic guitar in hand. "Quiet Company!" Casey shouted, wanting to get some applause for them.

“Actually, my name’s Taylor. Not Quiet Company.” Taylor clarified. They co-sang a song, and it was a cover I don’t imagine anyone would have thought they would do, since it was first done by Kenny Rogers and Dolly Parton. Taylor sang the first verse of “Islands in the Stream”, with Casey handling the second, before they turned it into more of a duet. It was mostly acoustic at first, too, and was truly beautiful, easily the most gorgeous song that any band did this night, and that held true even when guitarist Zak Loy and the rest of the band joined in on the song.

Taylor exited the stage after that song, though “Sing Loud” continued the beautiful, tranquil mood that cover had established, before winding things down with another number. As they prepared to end their show, Casey again took a seat behind the keys, while Jeff went back to the pedal steel guitar. “... This is about a letter written during the Civil War...” said Casey, adding this was one of his favorite songs to do. And while he was saying all that, Zak was exchanging his guitar for a mandolin. That was how they set up their final song, “Lexington”.

There can be no arguments that all five of them are extraordinary musicians. Clint was a fantastic drummer, while Jeff added a bit of elegance to the show, his fingers dancing fluidly across the keyboard. Nick had that same swagger all (or at least most) bassists seem to have, with even a little more gusto, and while Zak is a great guitarist, it was a little weird for me to not see him going full throttle, as he did with the band I last saw him in (the now defunct Mothers Anthem). As for Casey, he was clearly the glue that held them all together.

I can appreciate all that, but on the flip side, I still was made into a fan. Their music was often beautiful, especially at the times they had some four part harmonies going, but I also found it to be generic, and even dull, never holding my complete and undivided attention.

They currently have no shows on the horizon, though you can of course preview and buy their music in [iTUNES](#).

When it was all said and done (and given how few people were there, either due to the weather or whatever), I felt like the \$20 price tag to get in was overpriced by at least five dollars, and probably more like eight. Still, Quiet Company and The Reynolds Number softened the blow of the cost, making it worth it in the end.