



howwastheshow.com

Reviews of live shows in the Twin Cities of Minneapolis and St. Paul and around the world

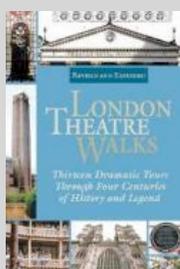
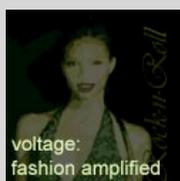
Home
Calendar
Links
Photo of the Week
Acknowledgements
Mission
Editor's Weblog
2003 Reviews
2002 Reviews

Selected Twin Cities Area Pop Music

Venue Calendars:
[First Avenue Calendar](#)
[400 Bar](#)
[Fine Line Music Cafe](#)
[Triple Rock Social Club](#)
[Uptown Bar](#)
[The Quest Club](#)
[Lee's Liquor Lounge](#)
[The Turf Club](#)
[The Terminal Bar](#)
[Urban Wildlife Club](#)

Other Resources

[Artist Direct Search](#)
[Twin Cities Alternative Shows List](#)
[City Pages Music Calendar](#)
[Drive105 Concert Summary](#)
[Radio K Concert Summary](#)
[Google Music Clubs \(Minneapolis\)](#)



Sea Ray (Sunday, March 14th, First Avenue, Minneapolis)

Reviewed by Brian Marx

I sometimes find it difficult to rejoice when a band (any band for that matter) I've been waiting to see is scheduled to play on a Sunday. The prospect of another five-day stretch in corporate America overshadows the possibility of really enjoying the show. My typical Sundays consist of attempting to make an even larger ass-crater in my couch, guzzling water, and planning a pre-Soprano's dinner. So, it didn't help that New York City's Sea Ray was scheduled to go on at 9 PM this past Sunday night right when I'd normally be heading into my post-show psychoanalysis of Tony Soprano's erratic behavior. Regardless, one listen to Sea Ray's sophomore effort, *Stars at Noon*, quickly got my mind off the streets of New Jersey and focused on being in the First Avenue Mainroom that night.

Having obtained their album via their website (www.searaymusic.com) almost six months prior to seeing them live for the first time, I had plenty of time to dissect their strengths, quirks, and shortcomings. My expectations were high, especially if they were to sound anything like they do in the studio. The crowd Sunday was expectedly sparse at first glance. Sea Ray was opening for The Church, and I could tell right away that most of the crowd had never heard of this New York band before, so I kept my eyes peeled for reactions. The audience was shaped like a figure eight, with a herd up front and herd in the back bar. Overlooking the odd crowd formation, the band was comfortable on stage. They mentioned that the 200 extra square feet of stage in the Mainroom was "lovely", as opposed to the 7th Street Entry "shoebox" they played in on their virgin Minneapolis appearance.

The first thing a newcomer would probably notice about Sea Ray is that not only do they have a lone female in the band, Anne Brewster, but a lone female playing an oversized cello. This is, in my opinion, Sea Ray's signature and strength. Sea Ray released a previous LP, sans cello, to much less fanfare. Brewster carried along each song, aiding them in their weakest points, giving lead singer/songwriter Jordan Warner's voice added mystique and melodious quality. All told, Sea Ray is a 6-piece, complete with keyboard, percussion, bass, and lead guitar.

Realizing I was in for a typical opening band "short but sweet" set, Sea Ray still managed to throw me a curve ball. Thinking they'd try and squeeze in as many songs from *Stars at Noon* as possible, I was pleasantly surprised when they played a handful of either old, unreleased, or new material. Backed by a screen displaying appropriate, possibly even authentic childhood images, they began their set with "Stray Dog's Got it Made", a humble song that brought itself to a climactic finish. Only adding to my feeling of nostalgia, without taking a breath, Sea Ray ripped into their rocker, "Quiver". Looking over my shoulder I noticed the crowd gathering, all sporting similar facial expressions: eyes wide, mouths open. Watching Warner's stoic, almost Christ-like posture, only added to Sea Ray's already confident music. Having snatched the audience's attention away from the bartender, they decided to alter the mood for a few low key, albeit melodic, mostly unknown numbers.

For the most part, Sea Ray was quiet and seemingly a bit tired (much like everyone else in the place), yet they were still intent on giving Minneapolis one last dose of energized, atmospheric chamber rock. They ended the show with their three standout tracks from *Stars at Noon* (hear the entire album online at www.teamrockstar.com/searay), "Revelry", "Sister Gone", and its spacious closer "Hall of Fame". Watching Brewster move around on the cello like a female Jimi Hendrix during "Revelry" was mesmerizing. After finishing with a distortion-laden "Hall of Fame", Sea Ray bowed out in modest fashion, thanking everyone for listening. Brewster received an extra round of applause (either for her sweater removal or musical talent) as she wrapped up her cello. All in all, it couldn't have been a more appropriate show for a dreaded Sunday; short, light and...a cute cellist.

Brian Marx is brimarx@hotmail.com



New York City's Sea Ray performed at First Avenue Sunday evening



[free website counter](#)

*Pay no attention to
what the critics say;
there has never
been set up a statue in
honor of a critic.*

-- Jean Sibelius

• [Home](#) • [Calendar](#) • [Links](#) • [Acknowledgements](#) • [Mission](#) • [Weblogs](#) • [Contact](#)

Contact site owner: David de Young editor@howwastheshow.com - Promotional CD's and materials should be sent to howwastheshow.com, 3010 Hennepin Avenue South, #245, Minneapolis, 55408-2614

All uncredited reviews and photos by David de Young unless otherwise noted.

© howwastheshow.com 2002-2003. All rights reserved.
Most material can be used by permission. Just ask.