

A Kingdom for the Blues

No, he doesn't exactly look like a prince. With his Steven-van-Zandt reminiscent headscarf and the black jacket under the casually shouldered guitar, he looks more like a musical buccaneer. Also the speaking voice of the American blues-pirate is not of the nobility. A drawling mumble somewhere between Tom Waits and Alexis Korner. One has to take care to follow the words. And when Prince Robinson slides over the strings like ice-skating queen Anni Friesinger on the fast track, the eyes of the audience are even more overworked than their school English.

The venue of this remarkable performance was the Hot Jazz Club. On Saturday night once again an island of the curious in search of discovery. For those guests this was a memorable experience, a lesson in authentic Blues-power.

Robinson is presenting his new album. It has taken five years for him and his companions, including the brilliant Hammond-B3 player Wolfgang Roggenkamp as second soloist, to bring this collection of a dozen classics to light. A production time that betrays much about the indifference of the record business. The CD, entitled "Almost From Sunrise", is one of the earthiest productions of this genre since years and, presented live, once more in a class of its own. The best advertising for the product - although the hardest work.

But Robinson seems not to worry about it. He weighs his two treasures – a Tom Anderson and a Fender guitar – like babies in his arm, kissing and stroking them, coaxing out heart-rending tones. Sometimes one hears Jimi Hendrix in there. Stevie Ray Vaughan too. Quotes but no plagiarism. And whoever thinks they know titles like „Good Morning Little Schoolgirl“, „Hoochie Coochie Man“, „Born Under a Bad Sign“ or „Iko Iko“ by heart already, have not yet met this man. Out of the stormy Hammond organ, sultry growling on the bass (Colin Bass, ex-“Camel”) and the rhythmic ecstasy of drummer Kai Schoenburg, develop interpretations that go back to the roots – before the blues became a hi-fi soundtrack for yuppies. An honour for the club and for the Prince, who will hopefully soon return as a King.

- Klaus-Peter Heß

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