

These are reviews and pictures taken by people attending Joe Strummer's first solo gigs in almost 10 years. If you have any reviews or pictures PLEASE PLEASE [send them to me](#) and you'll be given due credit.....

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JUNE 6 AT THE LOMAX, LIVERPOOL, UK

REVIEW 1 (submitted by [BILLY](#))



As far as Special Guests go there wasn't any. A DJ played a lot of great reggae though interspersed with a couple of tracks from Combat Rock i.e. Ghetto Defendant at the end of which he done something quite interesting with the track mmmm hard to explain. But if he ever reads this he has got to send me a tape.

Then The Mescaleros made their entrance stage left. My first impression was they all seemed to be under 25 the drummer excepted. I thought of recent B.A.D. gigs there is no question M.J. loves to be surrounded by young guys I think he feels less of his age with them around.. (ooohhh that was bitchy)

No worries with these lads though they knew who the crowd were here to see and they stayed very much in the background but provided a great backbeat for Joe's vocal.

And so to the man himself as he made his entrance he screamed HELLO AGAIN LIVERPOOL and from that moment the crowd were putty in his hands. My first thoughts were Joe's filled out (middle age?). As my wife Pat and I were right at the front we were able to get some great photo's he drank from my water bottle and at the end of the set shook hands with Pat and gave her his plectrum WOW!!!!

Anyway enough about us, Their opening number was a new song I didn't catch the title but it was either Something D.J. or Something Decay. It was a superb little number and this song promised a great evening in store. As the number came to an end a number of the crowd were screaming out for London Calling and Joe just held out a hand and screamed YEAH. London Calling blazed out, I couldn't believe it I was transformed 20 years back it was really hard not to think this was The Clash on stage. (Anyone who never got to experience a Clash gig will certainly get a real taste on this tour).

Then another new song that rocked. Then he talked about Pete Wylie (local band member) and asked if he was here tonight and offered him a fiver (£5) for a contribution Wylie made to the Liverpool Echo newspaper in an article about Joe. If Pete was there he didn't take up the offer. Then came The Clash's greatest recording White Man (In the Hammersmith Palais). This was Classic Clash, if you closed your eyes you could almost feel the original line up on stage. Then a dedication, this song is for Topper Headon he yelled as the band played Straight To Hell. Then a couple more new songs, again both tracks were excellent, surely every new song couldn't be great? Then a bit of politics "You know, I was reading The Guardian recently and it was the tenth anniversary of Tienanmen Square and you know how many protesters turned up?, just one guy had balls big enough to stand in the square giving out leaflets before the secret police came and took him away. I wrote this song 8 months after the massacre and its been put on a shelf for 9 years and 4 months and now its time to come out" The song again stood out as class. I Fought the Law was next and again it was superb. "Now when we play the next song I dont want you all to leave through those doors". He said pointing at the main entrance. "Because this song's called Tony Adams*."(*see below.)

More prompts from the audience; Bankrobber!, Rock the Casbah!, both songs were played surrounded by new tracks. The only request he didn't play was Rockin' World hmm maybe that was a good thing. Then came the last track Yalla Yalla. "This is the next single". Joe said. OOOooohhh I dont know about this one, maybe a few hearings will change my opinion but this song was the weakest offering of the evening and went on for about 15 minutes.

They left the stage. I noticed sweat dripping from the ceiling. The Lomax holds about 200 people, as we had entered, our tickets were taken and we asked for our portion back we were told to come back after the show, looking back the tickets were being resold on the street outside suddenly The Lomax became a 400 person venue, Naughty but nice, it all added to the atmosphere inside I suppose. Encore time. Yet another great new song and the finale Tommy Gun. I couldn't have wished for a better set of songs, they mixed so effortlessly with the new material. The Mescaleros were fantastic and Joe Strummer is God. All Hail The New Clash.....

*Tony Adams is an English soccer player who plays for Arsenal F.C. arch rivals to Liverpool F.C

REVIEW 2 (FROM "THE GUARDIAN" NEWSPAPER and sent in by Jonnyp)

Midway through Joe Strummer's blistering comeback at Liverpool Lomax comes a defining moment which proves the old adage "They just don't make 'em like that anymore". Strummer is on stage for the first time in years and loving every minute of it. With his guitar low-slung like a gunslinger, he looks like a cross between Robert de Niro as Jake la Motta and a Nicaraguan terrorist. He looks, in short, like a rock star should. Suddenly, during a momentary quiet in the music, somebody shouts out: "You're as cool as fuck, you are!" Strummer doesn't even look up, but carries on singing "Voting won't get you anywhere, fooling with the government. The British Army's waiting out there..."

The song, of course, is (White Man) In Hammersmith Palais, The Clash's devastating deconstruction of pop and the political, written in 1978 and perhaps even more relevant now than then. With our pop in its sorriest state since Strummer and punk cohorts first revitalised it, the last renegade returns to rally his troops.

Strummer has a clutch of new material and a new, skin-tight band, The Mescaleros, and together they manage to reconcile the man's legendary past (which will again stalk us when the first Clash live album appears in September) with the release of a new single, Yalla Yalla, later this month.

In a club so small you can spit at the singer from the back wall (nobody does), the set just reeks of rebirth. The new songs drip with the heroism and reggae glory of the Clash's heyday, but also show that the man has kept abreast of the times, right down to dance beats and speeches inspired by last week's Guardian (the sole protester at the anniversary of Tiananmen Square) and the morning's Liverpool Echo (about Pete Wylie, who owes him a fiver).

The set divides between politics and party. "Can anyone tell me which way to go? Can anyone give me good radio?" he sings at one point; at another he introduces a song called Tony Adams (about, weirdly enough, border controls). Interspersed with the new stuff are Clash hits (a rousing London Calling; a desolate Straight To Hell). He leaves us with a Tommy Gun so startling I drop my can of lager, and grown men are seen to weep into the streets.

REVIEW 3 BY [Simon Hurley](#)

The last time I saw Joe Strummer was in 1991 as front man for the Pogues. That night they played mainly Pogues songs as well as London Calling, Straight to Hell and I Fought the Law. The time before this, Joe was fronting the Latino Rockabilly War.

8 years on, and for the first time, looking a little heavier, and a little older, Joe walks almost angrily, almost reluctantly on to a tiny stage in a 200 capacity club in Liverpool. The script is almost the same. Snarl and look angry, appear slightly distant, and play London Calling, Straight to Hell and I Fought the Law. At the Pogues gig in Manchester, the person next to me commented "this is one of his songs" as Straight to Hell began. Tonight it was embraced. Tonight it was expected. Joe knew he wasn't going to get away with playing only Mescaleros songs, something he turned to his advantage in his pre gig press releases.

This is slightly disappointing. Don't get me wrong, I have spent most of my adult life being distracted by the Clash, and to be more specific Joe. This was a gig out of the blue for a Clash connoisseur desperate for a fix. On this Joe delivered. When you've gone almost ten years without hearing a live rendition of your favourites, you start to believe that Oasis aren't actually

that bad. The Mescaleros performed the classics with enthusiasm although at times they looked as though they were wondering what had hit them. The Mescaleros are most definitely a "him and us band". Maybe this is what Joe had in mind with the Clash. One review I have recently read suggests that it was "hard not to think this was the Clash on stage". No possibility.

The Mescaleros rely on their band leader, and play as though they will be punished for straying from the script. At times the bassist and guitarist looked nervous. This is understandable, they are providing the backing music for the main event. When the Clash played live, no song ever seemed to be played the same twice. A few gigs under the Mescaleros belt will certainly see them gain in confidence, but unless they have the courage to express themselves, the songs may start to sound "reeled off".

Joe isn't a dictator, but he is surely the pilot. There is room for initiative, but not for a power struggle. So what do the Mescaleros sound like? In a word good. They are tight, and they are raw. A major appeal to a Clash die hard. The new songs are varied. "Yalla Yalla" slightly tecno, "Forbidden City" slightly Punk Rock Blues/Trash City. The second song, called X-ray Style (I think) sees Joe upset at the highly strung roadie not rigging his ghetto blaster correctly. What follows is a jumble of percussion, and the rest of the band looking lost as Joe tries to salvage something. This will sound better on CD. A song called "Tony Adams", an English football player with considerably more brawn than brain. I hope this isn't a tribute. A couple of others I can't quite remember but quite liked.

Joe commented before this tour that if you were going to see the BeeGees live, you'd expect to hear the classics. Would the same be true if Barry Gibb was playing live? You see, this is my major criticism. The Clash split 16 years ago. No one disputes their quality, least of all me. Then I was 19 years old. I knew that the legend would see me through for a while. It did. Today, since the split, no band has ever inspired me as much as the Clash, and I can play their songs all night long. I'm not bored of them, but I am looking for new inspirations. You tend to look at your heroes for this, and apart from E=MC², and a few solo Joe songs, it has been a long wait.

Most articles where Joe is mentioned these days have him portrayed as a highly likeable, genuine sort of geezer. Shaun Ryder said as much and commented that Joe seems to know everyone, and everyone seems to know him. I have met Joe several times and this is certainly how he comes across. Joe the family man. So what drives him, more specifically, what makes him seem so angry on stage? His new songs are not revolutionary but are slightly rebellious. What turns Joe from being a romantic, all round nice bloke, to a slightly bitter looking reactionary lead singer once he takes the stage. Lets face it, everyone loved him at the Lomax. Perhaps Joe represents a side to us old Clash fans that appeals. In the end we all had to conform however reluctantly, and no matter what gloss we put on it, we're not that different from your average Phil Collins fan. The same is true for Joe. But at least we all know that we questioned it.

So, Joe, if you are reading this, the gig was brilliant, the Clash songs were great to see played live again, and you still remain a cult figure. But, develop the set, and have more belief in what you do now. From the look of the audience, a strange mix of accountants, mechanics, and possibly even policemen, but overwhelmingly white thirties something male, you were playing to the converted. You need to add a new audience. From what I have read, this is a full on project and Joe is back. So, if you mean this, give us something to stir us out of our impending middle age, and continue to remind us of what live music really sounds like. If you disagree, you may as well reform the Clash.



JUNE 7TH AT KING TUT'S WAH WAH HUT, GLASGOW, U.K.

REVIEW 1 posted by [hdbsu](#) on [alt.music.clash](#) newsgroup.

Like so many guys my age (33) I never had the chance to see The Clash but when Strummer played in Glasgow recently at King Tut's Wah Wah Hut I just had to go along.

I won't bore you with some tome about the gig, it was simply too good to describe, loads of Clash stuff, White Man, Casbah, Tommy Gun and the new stuff sounded good, especially Techno D-Day.

He's touring this winter, go see him, the backing band is also shit hot!!

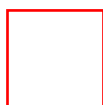


JUNE 8TH AT THE WEDGEWOOD ROOMS, PORTSMOUTH, U.K.

REVIEW 1 by [Oliver Gray & Richard Williams](#)

Imagine getting mistaken for your hero, and on your birthday too. That's what happened to Richard Williams, ex-Trip geetar hero and publicity officer at the Tower, Winchester. Don't look now, whispered the person in front of him in the queue for the bar, but Joe Strummer's standing behind you. Crikey, he means me, realised Richard, and made no effort to dispel the false impression. It's a compliment in lots of ways, not least that Joe is in pretty fine shape for a man who has tested rock & roll excess to its limits. Warming up for Glastonbury, he was greeted ecstatically by a roomful of ex-punks calling out chummy things like "Welcome back, you bleep old bleep". And he didn't disappoint. In a perfectly-formed set, he treated us alternately to spanking new songs and Clash classics. In the new song department, I can't be very informative

as to titles, since they are so new, but without exception they were humorous, rhythmical and clever: just what you'd expect, in fact. Clash highlights included "London Calling" (twice) which will storm Glastonbury, as well as good-as-new renditions of "Tommy Gun", "Rock The Casbah" and more. The Mescaleros did the almost impossible by sounding as good and fresh as the Clash while adding to the musical depth. Hang on to this band, Joe. Your career will take off as if there had been no interruption.



JUNE 13 AT THE AMSTERDAM TIBETAN FREEDOM CONCERT (RAI PARKHAL)

[Check out Joe Strummer rockin' the Casbah on this video clip from the TFC at Amsterdam](#) (You must [download Windows Media Player](#) first)

REVIEW 1 BY "SteveR" (posted on [London's Burning Message Board](#))

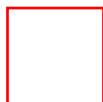
Yesterday I saw Joe Strummer and the Mescaleros in a venue resembling an aircraft-hanger in Amsterdam. The event was the Tibetan Freedom Concert 1999, an excellent cause suiting Strummer's politics, music and lyrics more than most (see www.milarepa.org for the Milarepa Fund and Tibetan Concert info).

Having seen the Clash on the London Calling and subsequent UK tours, it was with a mixture of intrepidation and excitement that I waited to see a teenage hero. Amongst a line-up of some current rock 'n roll stars (Blur, Thom Yorke), Strummer and co. took the stage mid-afternoon. The new band are young and fresh-faced, but look confident. The opening number is a great White Man in Hammersmith Palais, a joy to hear again with real 'roots rock rebel' (sorry, but the tribute version sucks). A couple of new numbers, Forbidden City (about Tianmen Square) and Tony Adams (about the footballer!?). The former may need a few plays but the latter is absolute top-notch. Rock the Casbah comes next, always a good sing-a-long for the crowd, followed by a great version of Straight to Hell with Strummer prowling the stage like an old general. The last new song played, Yalla Yalla, has a strong hook and mellow guitar mood, with mad sax playing at the end.

I've been disappointed with much of Joe's post-Clash output, but I'd say he was back on track with his new songs without being buried in the past. Course, he's no spring chicken anymore, but it's wonderful to hear some great songs aired again, and he's still passionate about his music. The band complete the short set with a blistering I Fought the Law, harder and faster than the recorded Clash cover.

All in all, I'd recommend the band to Clash fans past and present. Just next time, I wanna see

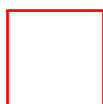
them in a small dingy club with a bit more rock 'n roll atmosphere.



JUNE 14 AT ELYSÉE-MONTMARTRE, PARIS, FRANCE.

BOOTLEG AVAILABLE

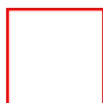
Contact [Dominique Sureaud](#) to arrange a trade.



JUNE 20 AT THE PROVINSSIROCK FESTIVAL, SEINÄJOKI, FINLAND (Afternoon Performance).

REVIEW 1 by [Hannu Niemi](#) (posted on [London's Burning Message Board](#))

The Mescaleros` gig at Provinssirock in Finland was a great success. We heard a few new ones, most of them reggae orientated, very dramatic and exciting songs. Old Clash classics too, including "London Calling", "Rock The Casbah", "Should I Stay Or Should I Go", "Bankrobber", "Straight To Hell". Joe was very annoyed about his guitar, and gave some shock treatment to his amplifier. They had two encores and no more songs to play, so they played "Rock The Casbah" twice.



JUNE 20 AT HULTSFREDFESTIVALEN, SWEDEN (Night Performance).



Joe performing at Hultsfred - note he's still got what it takes to look good on stage!

REVIEW 1 by [Wilhelm Eliasson](#)

The Hultsfred Festival..30 000 visitors (in a town of 7 000 inhabitants), one of them our hero Joe Strummer. It had been a fantastic festival, the biggest in its history, and according to many its best. In the festival programme was among others Suede, Marilyn Manson, Manic Street Preachers, Hole, Placebo, Sick Of It All and Atari Teenage Riot, but the band i was there to see was the punkbands Skitsystem (Shit System), The Kristet Utseende (The Chrisitan Look :D), the old swedish punkhero Stefan Sundström, Dropkick Murphy's and the synthbands Statemachine and S.P.O.C.K.

On the last day of the festival (Sunday the 20th of june) Joe Strummer was supposed to play at the largest stage at the festival at 10 p.m. I arrivied there a half hour earlier. I'd planned to see the swedish folkrockband Garmarna (The Guards At The Gates of Hell :)) at 9 p.m. but the persons i shared tent with screwed up, and i ended up running a whole kilometre, and that's a lot for the lazy me. I arrivied at the Garmarna Show, and saw one song, my favourite, and started running towards Joe Strummer.

Me and my friend Miikka arrivied at the stage 9.30 and situated ourselves on a hill about a hundred metres from the stage to ensure ourself to actually see the guy...this was because swedish people generally are pretty tall, and I'm not...although I'm swedish :).

At, should we say, 10.30 Joe arrived at stage, picked up his guitar and started playing "London Calling", and it sounded absolutely fantastic. I ran down the hill and jumped right down the mosh-pit, jumping around just 2 metres from Joe...and he looked in great condition playing his guitar and screaming out the sounds of London Calling.

One of the nicest things about the concert was that it was such a mixed audience: 40yrs old ex-punks, indiegirls, young punks, crusties...and everybody was in complete extasy. I especially remember an old guy standing completely still, in tears, saying: -fan vad bra, fan vad bra, fan vad bra (fucking great, fucking great, fucking great).

After London Calling, he did a new song...a kind of a reggae-folkrock thing, which i enjoyed pretty much, because I'm a big Pogues and Levellers-fan. He continued with "I Fought The Law" and followed in a orgy of old Clash-hits and some new material. According to my large amount of alcohol intake I have it a bit hard to remember exactly which songs he played, but i seem to recall, English Civil War, Rock The Casbah, Brand New Cadillac, Straight To Hell, and White Man in Hammersmith Palais.

The concert closed with Bankrobber, and Joe left the stage. Alltough no one wanted to leave, and a big singalong of bankrobber started, but after awhile the Suede fans arrived to see their favourite band, and the whole thing was over. I left the area with a huge smile on my lips.

Well, what grades can I give the concert? 10 out of 10, I must say...fantastic...

Is there any more to say? Well, after the show I went back to my tent, which i shared with 9 friends... and what did i see?!...the swedish rap-star Markoolio, sat in our tent drinking our gin..fuck, i hate him!...it was my friend Marias fault. She had picked him up somewhere...he asked me if i were a Clash-fan...YES! I replied with a big smile on my face..I am!...



I'm still looking for reviews from the following gigs:

June 7 in Glasgow

June 8 in Portsmouth

June 13 in Amsterdam (TFC)

June 14 in Paris

June 15 in Brussels

June 16 in Hamburg

June 20 at the Hultsfredfestival in Sweden

**JOE STRUMMER & THE MESCALEROS ARE:
JOE STRUMMER: LEAD VOX & GUITAR
ANTONY GEMM: GUITAR
MARTIN SLATTERY: KEYBOARD & GUITAR
GERARD LYNCH: DRUMS
PABLO COOK: PERCUSSION
SCOTT SHIELDS: BASS**

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JUNE 29 AT NIGHTCLUB 9.30, WASHINGTON DC, USA.

REVIEW 1 BY [David Shorr.](#)

Won't attempt a full review, just a few random observations. I thought the band sounded great and the new stuff sounded great. Still mining the reggae guitar vein--fine with me--reflected not only in the new songs but in the generous sampling of "Harder They Come" and Marley songs on the tape played during the break. The show was dedicated to Bo Didley, a Washingtonian.

I asked Joe the planned release date for the new disc, and he said that while officially it's mid/late-October, it will probably slip.

Maybe I simply never noticed before, but he looks to have been playing the same guitar all these years.

Perhaps the most significant contribution I can offer is the following list of Clash songs in the set. I think I've got them all here. Roughly in order: London Calling, I Fought the Law, White Man..., Brand New Cadillac, Straight to Hell, Rock the Casbah, Junco Partner, Tommy Gun, Bankrobber>

I had asked Joe about Revolution Rock (a personal fave), but he said there's only so much he can remember, never mind teach the band.

REVIEW 2 BY [Jason Harshman.](#)

I was at the show at the 9:30 club in washington dc on june 29th and what an amazing show it was. I got there at about 8:30 pm and bought my shirt (the most expensive shirt i have at \$25-a little too much). The opening band was the dleta 72 from philly. I kinda liked the 1st songs but after that ever song sounded the same as the 1st. The singer hardly sang and when he did sing a lot it was on their instrumental song. They were very talented but not a band I really liked. Their set ended at about 9:30. After that I walked around and noticed at almost 21 i was one of the youngest people there. I also saw Ian McKaye (Minor Threat/Fugazi) and the rest of Fugazi there and some of the Pietasters. Joe hit the stage around 10:30 (an hour after the 1st band) and played for about an hour (I always seem to be beside the guy who is the most wasted at every show i'm at - this one was funny cause he said weird stuff like this show is better than cucumbers??). The show kicked off a mid tempo song off his upcoming album and went right into London Calling. Here is the complete set list: new song/london calling/x-ray style/whit man in hammersmith palais/tony adams/straight to hell/rock the casbah/yalla yalla(a very good song)/brand new cadillac/i fought the law/encore 1/junco partner/techno d-day/tommy gun/encore 2/bankrobber.

Joe played with alot of emotion(like he always has)it was one of the loudest shows i've

seen(tony adams and tommy gun were the loudest)it was amazing hearing old tunes and the new stuff mixed really well. A very energetic show and one of the best i've seen in a long time. Joe said that he'd be back in the winter time so be on the look out for him.i saw a few people crying and i saw a few people will cell phones calling friends and holding them up so the other person could here this amazing man dazzle us all.joe and the mescaleros sure as hell have the same energy the clash had.welcome back joe!!!!

REVIEW 3 BY J. Tayloe Emery of **SONICNET**.



Photo by J.Tayloe Emery at Nightclub 9:30

London came calling again Tuesday night as ex-Clash singer/guitarist Joe Strummer kicked off his first U.S. tour in 10 years with an impassioned performance of Clash classics and tunes from his upcoming second solo album.

A sold-out crowd of colorful young punks and graying elder punks was equally enthusiastic about new material from Strummer's X-Ray Style and Clash tunes such as "London Calling", as revived by Strummer and his band, the Mescaleros.

"This is as close to the Clash as I'm ever going to get," 18-year-old Kandi Walker of Bethesda, Md., said. "I was too young to see them back in the early '80s, so this is my chance to see Joe in action."

The Clash, one of the original wave of British punk bands and one of the most influential, broke up in 1986, after releasing the poorly received Cut the Crap a year earlier. Strummer (born John Graham Mellor) has since done some movie scoring, played briefly with the folk-punk band the Pogues and released a solo album, Earthquake Weather, in 1989. He has been quiet for much of the '90s, partly because of a contract dispute with Sony Music.

The dispute has been settled, and the 46-year-old rocker is slated to release X-Ray Style on Hellcat/Epitaph Records in the fall.

"Heyyy ... Washington, D.C.," Strummer said as he strolled up to the mic shortly after 10 p.m., in black jeans and a black T-shirt, his cowboy swagger and jet-black hair and sideburns unchanged from his Clash days. "This is the home of Bo Diddley. We're gonna go check out his home where he grew up, if we can find it."

Actually, Diddley, the rock pioneer who opened several U.S. shows for the Clash in 1979, was born in Mississippi and grew up in Chicago. But if Strummer didn't quite have his geography straight, he seemed to still have his punk-rock mojo in order.

Stomping his black work boots and counting off the beat, he strapped on his guitar and jumped straight into a new song, "Diggin' the New," which showcased the Mescaleros' pronounced enthusiasm. Strummer's voice, though a little rougher for the wear, still pierced the air with its trademark shrieks and howls. His hands moved often to his face, fingers outstretched and grabbing his skull as if he had been hit in the forehead with a mallet.

In all, he played nine songs from the Clash catalog—including such classics as "White Man in Hammersmith Palais" and songs the Clash covered, including Vince Taylor's "Brand New Cadillac" and the Bobby Fuller Four's "I Fought the Law"—as well as five new tunes.

Fans rushed the stage as the first few power chords to "London Calling" blared from the amplifiers. "I've waited 15 years to hear this live," one older fan shouted to the amused teenager at his side.

The Mescaleros—guitarist Martin Slattery (ex-Black Grape), bassist Scott Shields, keyboardist Anthony Genn, drummer Smiley and percussionist Pablo Cook—took to such old Clash favorites as "Straight to Hell" and "Bankrobber" as if they were their own. "Tommy Gun" was a barrage of noise and feedback harking back to punk days of yore.

Cook even stood up on his bongos at one point and dove onto the stage, crashing into the rest of the band, adding a sense of the chaos the Clash brought to British nightclubs in the 1970s. The only disappointment for fans was that the Mescaleros' rendition of the Clash's biggest pop hit, 1982's "Rock the Casbah", didn't quite capture the original's fusion of punk and disco.

The Mescaleros, all young British lads who were probably in grade school when the Clash broke up in 1986, seemed to shine brightest on songs from Strummer's forthcoming album. "Tony Adams," which is "about an obscure soccer player from England," Strummer explained, the upcoming single "Yalla-Yalla" and the title cut, with its slow, passionate rhythms and bombastic bongo playing, all were warmly received.

After ending the hour-and-a-half set with "I Fought the Law" and "Brand New Cadillac," Strummer returned by himself for the first of two encores, playing an acoustic rendition of "Junco Partner"—a traditional song the Clash recorded for Sandinista (1980)—before being rejoined by the band for the new "Techno D-Day" and finishing off the night with "Bankrobber."

"The Clash influenced everyone," Mark Moore, 32, said after the show. "They weren't just punk. They were blues and jazz and reggae and country, all types of sounds rolled into one ... I just can't believe we were able to hear some of the old songs tonight."

"I sell lots of old Clash albums to kids wanting to start up a band," Moore said. "They ask me, 'Where should I start?' and I hand them a copy of London Calling. 'It's all right there, kid.' "

While Strummer's former bandmates Mick Jones and Paul Simonon are gathering tapes for an upcoming Clash live album, there is no talk of a Clash reunion. Strummer is scheduled to play in New York on Wednesday night (June 30) and wrap up the tour next week in Los Angeles.



JUNE 30 AT IRVING PLAZA, NEW YORK CITY, USA



Photos by ["Oysterman9"](#). Check out the photos from other New York gigs [by clicking here](#).

REVIEW 1 BY [Thomas Di Benedetto](#).

Well, the warmup band was a ska band called the Slackers. They were decent & seemed to be having alot of fun on stage. When prompting the audience to "give it up" for the keyboard player they got a mild reaction from the audience. When the keyboard player saw this he asked the audience to "give it up" for Joe Strummer & the crowd went mental. This says alot about the

attitude of the crowd. We were waiting for Joe. I don't know the names of any of the new songs, but he opened with one that was very good. But when he started the second song, I got chills. It was London Calling & Joe played it like he just recorded it! The crowd was in a frenzy & the song seemed to take on new life. People were body surfing but no mosh pit. I was on a balcony overlooking the sold out General Admission audience. My view was great but I wondered what it must be like to be in the sea of heads below me. He did all the songs mentioned in the other reviews. I liked Yalla Yalla a lot. Of course, the Clash classics were great. Joe thanked Joey Ramone for being in the audience and complained about having trouble with a cop on the street that day and said "This is New York, isn't it?". I'll never be able to fully describe what it was like to be there, but you had the feeling that this was an event & I hope it captured it on video.

REVIEW 2 BY Mark Rubenstein.

The evening kicked off in line as we looked directly across fourteenth street at the dozed cavity that up until recently was The Palladium...where, almost exactly twenty years ago, my wife saw The Clash's gig where they snapped the cover shot for London Calling. So we're in and suffering through a fourth generation neo-ska band. Regulation. On every level. As opposed to Strummer & The Mescaleros. They kicked the night off, tastefully, with a new cut. I can't recall titles...sorry...my pedantic years are behind me now. Hopefully. The Strummer that I grew up with...and The Clash are my Beatles, Strummer my Sinatra...the Strummer I grew up with always looked, if not exactly flash, then definitely sharp. Strummer strolled out in a large t-shirt untucked looking the slob. Both his energy and commitment more than made up for his unfortunate appearance. The joint sold out....then OVERsold...turning the air conditioning off on a club chockers with sweaty guys. Sweaty guys are not my thing. Half the set...or thereabouts....consisted of Clash chestnuts....in part including London Calling, Bankrobber, Straight To Hell, Casbah, Hammersmith Palais, roaring encores of Junco Partner and Tommy Gun. The other half consisted of X-Ray Style cuts to come. That's half Clash, half X-Ray. Which left, unfortunately, no room for anything between Combat Rock and X-Ray Style. No Trash City. No Gangsterville. I lose. To hear The Mescaleros play the Clash numbers serves an important lesson on the products of chemistry amongst band members....they had none. And it showed. Ridiculously so. It was as if Strummer had jumped onstage to croon a few of the old ditties sitting in with AnyBand. No surprise, I reckon. Don't get me wrong...it was magic hearing Strummer go at those songs...his voice is always welcome back. Much to their credit, though, there seemed an abundance of chemistry between them during the new material. And if the rest of the set seemed like a bit of a sad cabaret, during the new songs Strummer was brimful of vitality.

Among the new songs, Yalla Yalla, X-Ray Style, Forbidden City, and the number about the footballer really stick out as strengths. Techno D-Day doesn't. In terms of style, Strummer's nicely built on that which he has done in the past ten to fifteen years. He still has fire...gamble...guts...his voice still vents his soul. Unless he's become the consummate faker, which didn't seem to be the case.

Among the mob to turn out that night: Joey Ramone, Jim Jarmusch and The Beastie Boys. Bob Gruen was shooting.

It'd been ten years since Strummer stormed NYC supporting his Earthquake Weather...it'd be nice to not have to wait another ten for his next gig. He remains one of the big boys. God bless him. Long may he live.

br>

REVIEW 3 BY Eleanor Flicker.

After almost a decade of not touring, Joe Strummer is back and playing at Irving Plaza in NYC on June 30th, part of a mini-tour with his new backing band The Mescaleros. I could hardly contain my anticipation in the days and weeks before the show. After years of laying low, it was like someone came and magically resurrected this important part of my favorite band ever and placed him in my backyard! I knew it couldn't be the same as seeing The Clash again, so I was trying to hold my expectations down in that regard, but I also knew that Strummer had created a body of work in recent years that although I've heard some teasers here and there, I've been dying to hear the bulk of it for the longest time. And because he's been introducing much of his material on this tour this show is a must, must see.

After getting together with some terrific Clash fans at a nearby tavern (an amc gathering!) to laugh, chat, reminisce and trade stories we succeeded in psyching ourselves even more up for this show than we already were to begin with.

So, time to get on with the show!

After a cool Ska set by the opening band "The Slackers", the roadies started setting up the modest sized stage for the Mescaleros behind a small movie screen showing oddball B&W silent movies. This took a long time and the impatient crowd shouted "Joe! Joe! Joe!" from time to time. The place was growing hotter and hotter with people packing themselves in, both on the main floor of the venue and on the upper balcony. There was easily 500 people there.

There was a mixture of young people who had probably never experienced The Clash live and older people in their thirties and forties; ex-punks sporting GAP clothes now and standing arm in arm with their girlfriends, husbands, wives...and maybe 3/4 of the crowd were male.

At last the band came out in a backdrop of dark red lighting. It was a rush seeing Strummer again and that close up. As others have commented before, Joe looks very much the same except a little more aged and slightly heavier. I wormed myself up a few feet behind the stage barricade. The first song is a new one called "Techno D-Day", which is slow and rhythmic with interesting, almost mournful lyrics.

The members of The Mescaleros are positioned all around the stage; guitarist, keyboardist/percussionist, bass, & drummer. From where I am it was very difficult to see them well but they appeared lively and invigorated the whole night. Joe was very gracious to them all evening, including giving each a full introduction after the second song. They're a good back up band, not outstanding themselves but more than adequate for getting the sounds across.

Next was "London Calling", which was great to hear again although it didn't have the "punch" it used to have when The Clash performed it. That didn't seem to stop the crowd though because they went absolutely nuts as soon as the first chord was played. I almost got crushed in a huge mosh pit that developed around me and had to move back about 10 feet to a safer area.

After "London Calling" Joe took a break to say hello to the New Yorkers. I could tell that he felt really good about this night and being back. He tried to relay us a story and was interrupted a

number of times by what I guess was an audience member yelling out song titles. He finally threatened to punch the guy out if he didn't shut up. After reclaiming his chance to speak, he went into a huge rant about how NY has changed after all these years. "...I was only smoking a cigarette on a street corner this afternoon and was harrassed for that by a cop!! I could not believe it! Is this what has become of New York? Has New York come to this where a person can't go out and do anything? Has New York become California?"

The band then goes into "X-Ray Style" which is a lush, relaxed reggae number.

"White Man in Hammersmith Palais" follows directly behind to loud audience cheers. It was great, long, full version and much of the crowd sang along. I think Joe may have improvised some of the lyrics.

After this song ended Strummer excitedly pointed out that his friends Joey Ramone and the members of The Beastie Boys were in the audience. In an almost fifties style the spotlight beamed on his special guests. He went on to say how he enjoyed performing at the Tibetan Freedom Concert with the Beasties and mentioned the importance of their cause.

Then he introduced the song "Tony Adams", which I really liked. It has a rhythmic reggae beat but also has flourishes of techno and other instrumental layers.

Following this number they played a striking version of "Straight To Hell". Joe changed some lines at the end to "When you're in NYC you think faster than you speak...".

"Rock the Casbah" was dedicated to Topper Headon. Throughout the evening Joe's voice is in fine shape. His singing is always soulful during the slower, more serious numbers and fresh and assertive during the rockers. He still has great timing.

Yalla Yalla, which is slated to be the band's first single followed. Its texturely rich. The song fuses strains of reggae, techno, and caribbean beats together. The song seems to reflect Joe's love of "world music". Joes vocals are very emotional and plaintive. I like it, but admittedly am not used to this style of music. For me it'll take a few more listens to absorb and judge it.

Next, Strummer gleefully announces that "There has been only two GREAT songs that ever came out of the UK. One is "Shakin' All Over" and the OTHER ONE is..." They go right into "Brand New Cadillac". Everyone in the house goes wild, jumping up and down and yelling along to the song's verses.

"Forbidden City", introduced as the song written 9 years ago as Joe's response to the Tianaman Square tragedy follows. Its obvious that Joe still has a knack for political protest.

After a rousing version of "I Fought the Law" to begin the first encore, the band delves into a sumptuous, brooding, and interactive version of "Bankrobber". Its thrilling that Joe lets the us in audience finish every other line in the song. And this crowd knows ALL the words.

The band comes back onstage to begin the second encore. Strummer began by requesting that people sing along if they want, but "Please don't clap along. It does something weird and throws me off. So don't clap unless you know how to clap in New Orlean's style". He plays "Junco Partner". The song sounds wonderful, very spirited, wandering and melodic. No one claps along. This song one of the big highlights for me.

They end the evening with a triumphant "Tommy Gun". Its the only hard/punky song of the night. It was fabulous to hear again and left us wanting more- a lot more. It proves that Strummer can still rock hard if he wants to, but he is most interested in growing in these other creative directions. And hopefully most of his older audience will be receptive to the new material. He still has the spunk.

MORE COMING SOON!!



I'm still looking for reviews from the following gigs:

June 7 in Glasgow

June 8 in Portsmouth

June 13 in Amsterdam (TFC)

June 14 in Paris

June 15 in Brussels

June 16 in Hamburg

June 20 at the Hultsfredfestival in Sweden

JOE STRUMMER & THE MESCALEROS ARE:
JOE STRUMMER: LEAD VOX & GUITAR
ANTONY GEMM: GUITAR
MARTIN SLATTERY: KEYBOARD & GUITAR
GERARD LYNCH: DRUMS
PABLO COOK: PERCUSSION
SCOTT SHIELDS: BASS

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