

ED SHEERAN QE THEATRE 10 APRIL 2012

COOL GIRL. **NO PHONE.**

*I know God made another one of me
to love you better than I ever will.*

CONCERT REVIEW... WHAT QUALIFIES ME TO WRITE A CONCERT REVIEW? (1)



1

I think it is my exquisitely eclectic taste in music. Genres, except Bieber (I actually like two Bieber songs (written by Ed Sheeran), and country, are palatable for the most part. Most music is about the moment rendering it ephemeral.

My musical background consists of:

Hey Lindsay, you have a ton of mixed tapes; if we rent the equipment, can you DJ the Husky Howler this Saturday; the pay is \$20 and all you can drink.

University of Saskatchewan; Football Dance, circa 1981)

Equipped with zero country music, I put together an electrifying night of Tom Petty, the Stones, the Beatles... and the saviour of the night, Stars on 45. Somehow, the night was a rousing success, which launched an eight-year DJ career.

Soon \$20 turned into \$250-\$350 per night as demand and my ability to mix – mixed tapes became epic (maybe in my own mind... the dollars don't lie); still *sans* country, as well as the *sans* Stars...

Over the years, I have seen numerous artists live, ranging from the Tragically Hip, Brian Adams, the Stones, Nas, Prince, the Cure... all the way to Beenie Man.

The most recent was Prince, in November 2011 (Update: Ed Sheeran + Snow Patrol +

Anne Marie, in Seattle in 2018), Prince was bleeping amazing!

Even if you are a Prince hater, there is no denying his lasting impact on music.

Before that, it was NAS, followed by the Cure (2006).

Adele was on the horizon, playing at a small venue called the Red Room. At the time, a Korean exchange student, Junwoo, stayed at my place.

Junwoo is a Nas fan.

I'm a fan of the Cure.

I suggested Junwoo go to Adele.

I told him she is the next big thing, and you will never have another opportunity to see her at a venue this small. He went. I stayed at home with the lame excuse that tomorrow was a workday.

Junwoo was a mere few feet from Adele on stage... shortly after, we all know what has happened to her career. I'd like to think I discovered her. I may be delusional; however, few people knew of her at this stage of her career... so I guess it was me after all.

As for Mr. Sheeran... well, I'm getting to it.

Music/life/living is influenced by whatever the hell is going on in life, be that tragic/happy/humorous/hopeful/dreadful... whatever.

Personally, mine cascades between all elements of living, even those not listed above.

A quick snapshot of the past year reveals:

- Love vacating for an extended period... I must remain positive because it will not be fleeting.
- I belong to a clan in flux. My parents died and magically returned to living nearly two-decades later.
- A good friend's wife suddenly passed.
- I've penned/typed several books (yet to be published as the publishing industry is disappearing and reinventing itself in nanoseconds). I'm afraid I may be a dinosaur, as with the advent of blogging/Facebook/Twitter, everyone has become a writer. However, few write about subjects larger than "I."
- Work sucks, mostly because I've been dangled a promotion carrot for nearly two years.
- And, as the years slip past, a realization has been made, like music, most of my "newer" friends, well, they too are ephemeral. More on that later.

Anyway, the gist of my rambling is that music adds comfort and depending on life issues, it dramatically influences taste.

That almost brings us to Ed.

I've been listening to Sheeran most Saturdays for over a year as I work on my website/writing/art projects. And frankly, regardless of the mood, he is fucking amazing!

He was coming here as a twenty-year-old in the spring of this year. I desperately wanted to go. But, with my love vacant, going alone made me feel blue... so I didn't go.

Several months later, a solo tour was announced, he was to play the Commodore Ballroom (Dance Club) on October 4th.

I must go, I thought, procrastination won out and by the time I acted: SOLD OUT.

Luck came calling... the demand was too high... a larger venue was needed.

I stopped procrastinating. I was at the ticket office the morning tickets were being issued.

I was prepared to buy two tickets... treat a friend, I thought. Two together wasn't an option, so I left with one.

The show sold out that day.

The day of the concert came. My love is still vacant... not returning anytime soon; I love coming home... I'm often sad when I arrive.

3 In the morning, the promotion carrots string finally broke. I was given a new vehicle and a contract offer that would increase my income significantly. Happy while at the same time emotionally drained. Happy will eventually prevail.

After the change in status, I attended a client's rooftop party (construction lingo for when the crane comes down). The party was in the parkade of the building, complete with a stripper pole, and get this: strippers. Oh yeah, and 100 or so construction dudes looking on.

After that, another client requested my presence for drinks. My promotion was raised in conversation.

"For someone who just received good news, you seem down," was suggested.

Another friend, when told of my good fate, proceeded to bitch/whine about how only nine out of every ten people are self-indulgent wastes of life, as he self-induced...

Drained is a more apt description.

The concert was rapidly approaching. Starting less than sixty minutes before my usual crash time, my mood was on life support. I thought of heading home to emptiness. I didn't.

THEATER ACT 1: SELAH SUE

Mood lifted.

Maybe it is my love for a hint of Reggae music. Selah started her short set out with “Ragamuffin.” Instantly her unique voice captures the soul on the stage equipped with a guitar and her voice. The audience was quickly drawn in by this upcoming musical star.

She’s young; I think she said twenty-three. Her voice is intoxicating. The crowd was hers. Most remained seated for her entire set. The crowd is there for Ed. She’s captured them.

Selah Sue is from Antwerp, Belgium. She’s Flemish. She used to sing in local clubs on weekends while attending high school during the week. Cee-Lo Green accompanied her on a duet, eventually asking to put “Please” on his own album. Last autumn, Prince offered her a support slot at his show in Antwerp.

Her star is rising!

THEATER ACT 2: PASSENGER

Passenger was born in Brighton, traveller of the World, a busker, unique, a troubadour.

Coming on stage at my bedtime; shortly after meeting a couple (male + female) who lived in England... The female went to Walter Murray High School – twenty-blocks from where I went to school. The energy of the evening was lifting me.

Passenger’s voice, once again; unique, equipped on stage with only a guitar and his voice – applauds with the culmination of each song; thirty-minutes of fresh.

The energy of the evening was lifting me.

Concerts often left us pinning for the featured artist, Selah Sue, along with Passenger, kept the audience in check as they realized this was not an ordinary concert.

Passenger’s star rising!

THEATER ACT 2: ED SHEERAN

Attendance: 2,929. Demographic: Male 29. Female 18-24: 2900.

My tiredness from the stress of becoming a “wanted” employee was passing. The couple I mentioned before said I would love the show.

Back inside, waiting for Ed to take the stage; thoroughly entertained and impressed with Selah Sue and Passenger – sold out show – one seat empty – just so happens to be the seat to my right, Coincidence, or simply being saved for the soul missing from my life!

Like the performers before, Ed (more Coincidence as “Ed” (was a) is part of the title of my memoir) took the stage equipped with nothing more than his acoustic guitar and his voice. Mr. Sheeran’s voice, pardon the expressions, *is as smooth as silk and creamy like butter.*

I was surprised by the audience because his music is layered in-depth and can, at times, be a touch dark. His lyrics chronicle a life far more profound than his twenty-one years of age. Maybe the audience statement is unfair as there is no reason the demographic can’t appreciate the meaning.

They scream the best things in life come free to us.

You were just a small bump unborn for four months then torn from life.

Maybe you were needed up there, but we’re still unaware as why.

Watching this talented musician command, the audience like a seasoned performer without a hint of arrogance gleaming with a genuine love of his craft was brilliant. From note one, he owned the audience. As said, only with a guitar and his voice; he weaved his way from song to story and back to music with his constituents’ wrapped around his little finger, assuming the role as background singers.

A quick riff of Gangnam style teased... turning the lights down and singing a folk song from his homeland was beautifully intoxicating.

He quipped about his days busking as he shared personal snippets from his life. He shared a beautiful story about his two godparents (not married) coming together in marriage and asking him to pen a song for their wedding.

I may be biased; however, there wasn’t a moment in his show where it waned. I never wanted it to end.

If you get a chance... go, see him perform before he becomes too big as he reaches the stratospheres.

They say I’m up-and-coming like I’m fucking in an elevator.

As for my mood, he lifted me from a day where I felt defeated and drained despite receiving a promotion that was twenty-two months in the works... without my love being present to calm my stress and share with me our lives as they move forward into the unknown. The seat beside me wasn’t truly empty...

During one of his introductions, he encouraged the audience to come together and make sure they express love for those important to them... hug your best friend... hug the person next to you... make the World a better place. Being surrounded by seventeen and eighteen-year-old girls... the moment was a tad awkward.

Partway through “Kiss Me” - tap-tap-tap, I turned, a young girl behind me quietly stated:

I will give you a hug, mister.

*You might be left with my hair, but you'll have your Mother's eyes;
I'll hold your body in my hands be as gentle as I can,
but for now, you're scan of my unmade plans,
Small bump four months you are brought to life."*

*So, am I close to you anymore? It's over
And there's no chance that we'll work it out
Oh, you and I ended over U N I
And I said that's fine, but you're the only one that knows I lied
You and I ended over U N I
And I said that's fine, but you're the only one that knows I lied.*

*Because, if I was gonna go somewhere, I'd be there by now,
And maybe I can let myself down, ohh
And thinking that I'm unaware, I keep my feet on the ground, keep looking around, to make sure
I'm not, the only one to feel low, Because if you want, I'll take you in my arms and keep you
sheltered, from all that I've done wrong.
And I know you'll say that I'm the only one.
But I know that God made another one of me love you better than I ever will.*

TODAY

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If I walked with the crowd – I'd never have come to this place.

Our eyes met across a crowded room, and we both knew in that instant. A smile, a wink, a nod - I found you standing next to me. Your presence consumed me as I fell deep into your being. We kissed. Sparks flew. My knees weakened. Yours did as well.

We ventured forth. A touch of your hand and a caress of your silky-smooth skin brought life to my World. Each day we learn from each other. The more I know about you - the more I lose myself in your beauty. Every wrinkle, every frown line, every imperfection... perfects you. You're beautiful. I love you.

We both like to please.

We do without order.

The intensity grows.

We climax together.

Each time we make love---the music sounds sweeter.

I sleep in your arms.

You hold without restraint.

You bring safety to my heart.

I'm the luckiest man alive – I've found my tomorrows.

One day when I wake – I'll go to that place.

When our eyes finally meet, the World will make sense. But, as I said once before - I'll repeat it: I love you, my dear, with every ounce of my heart.

Today I met my true love.

Today my World became brighter.

Today I became complete.

Is my true love real?

It has to be, my dear, it is now part of this story.

THAT PLACE

I stepped out into the World, once again alone. I walked away from the crowd and entered That Place. As written, our eyes met, and I knew in that instant. I found my love.

Fiction turned into reality.

We hugged.

We kissed.

Chills shot down my spine.

You swept me away.

I became vulnerable.

Next – was no longer in my control. As the night progressed, the passion intensified. The music indeed did become sweeter.

In the morning, you slept in my arms. I held without restraint. I couldn't sleep, yet comfort and peacefulness embraced me. My eyes were transfixed on your beautiful body. Consuming every inch - I became captured in your essence. You indeed are beautiful, my dear. I'm grateful to have met you.

Sadness fills my soul as it struggles with happiness. You've entered my life, and the visit will be fleeting. I long for you to feel the same way as me. I understand you may not. I don't want you to leave; you've helped me replace my frowns with smiles. I can't thank you enough.

I'll miss you deeply – I can't explain why. I hope one day our paths cross again, and you will become lost in me, as I'm lost in you.

Thank you for brightening my World, thank you for being honest, and thank you for being part of my story.

Next time I write it – I'll make sure you stay.

I hope wherever destiny takes you, happiness fills your heart, and you continue to share your beautiful smile with the World. In the brief moments, I've shared with you, your smile warmed my heart.

Thank you.

I love you.

- Excerpt from the soon-to-be-released: My Life on the Slush Pile

*Settle down with me, cover me up, cuddle me in
Lie down with me, yeah, and hold me in your arms
And your heart's against my chest, your lips pressed to my neck
I'm falling for your eyes, but they don't know me yet
And with a feeling I'll forget, I'm in love now*

*Kiss me like you wanna be loved, you wanna be loved, you wanna be loved
This feels like falling in love, falling in love, falling in love*

*Settle down with me, and I'll be your safety; you'll be my lady
I was made to keep your body warm, but I'm cold as the wind blows*

So, hold me in your arms

*My heart's against your chest, your lips pressed to my neck
I'm falling for your eyes, but they don't know me yet
And with this feeling I'll forget, I'm in love now*

Three taps on the sky, the clouds break, a brilliant, radiant light bursts forth, providing warmth, clarity, and understanding.

Time was simple, but clouds whisked simplicity away in a fast dance choreographed by confusion.

Another blood-stained brick and those closest to blue fly past the ghettos below, often, and aptly, in the same buildings, many created by greed.

Up is not the answer, yet; you want more; with each leap, dysfunction replaces sanity, and the pursuit you've been sold begins to fracture everything meaningful.

Another day, what was once present has now vanished, growth and the race toward happiness masquerades before us subtracting purity; more meaning is discovered, and you realize abundance only exists in the matters of the heart.

- Excerpt from GLUE (tentative release date: 2022)

Since this concert, Mr. Sheeran has become one of the most prominent artists in the World and has genuinely blown up.

He sold out Wembley Stadium (solo) three nights in a row, almost 300,000 people.

I have seen him five times – never disappointed.

1. I think concert reviews are stupid. If you like a musical artist, it drips in banality when you share your thoughts on seeing them live. If you write about the music. If you go see an act you like, here is every persons review: I. LOVED. IT. THEY. SOUNDED. JUST. LIKE. THE. RECORD. (2)
2. If you go to a concert to critique an artist, you don't like: YOU. ARE. AN. ASSHOLE.