



Indigo Girls strike a chord at Brevard

Concert Review:

by Jamie Michaels
Opinion Editor

Saturday, Sept. 30 brought the Indigo Girls to McCormick Field in Asheville.

Amy Ray and Emily Saliers, true to form, played a spectacular show. The acoustic duo, whose new album, *Despite our Differences*, is reviewed in this issue and now available in stores, played a strong mix of great new songs and old favorites.

The Weepies, another up-and-coming acoustic duo, opened for

the Indigo Girls. While vocally not as strong as the main stage group, The Weepies, who consist of Deb Talan and Steve Tannan, brought a unique sound and were a great introduction for the Girls. Think of a more upbeat, folksy Elliot Smith. If you like the Indigo Girls, Dar Williams, and Ani DiFranco's calm, not-quite-so-angry stuff, you'll love the Weepies.

Highlights from the Girls' performance included the obligatory classic "Closer to Fine" and a new song, "Little Perennials," which has been featured lately on our

very own WNCW. Other crowd-pleasers were "Land of Canaan," from the band's original 1989 self-titled album, Emily Saliers' soothing acoustic solo, and a rousing rendition of "Galileo," originally found on the 2000 album *Retro-spective*.

The venue (McCormick Field) was an interesting change of scenery from the typical concert hall. The outdoor atmosphere was perfect for the at-home feel the Girls generally try to inspire. For this fan, it couldn't have gotten much better.

Concert Review: Truckers play rock euphoria

Zack Harding
Arts & Life Editor

The Drive By Truckers played Saturday, Sept. 30th to a not so sold out crowd in the Thomas Wolfe Auditorium. However, those who were there experienced a true event of Rock n' Roll euphoria.

The Truckers are essentially a southern rock band with some material leaning toward country and some material leaning toward bare bones hard rock. They have often been compared to Lynyrd Skynyrd; while some aspects of the bands, such as having a three guitar attack, are similar, the Drive By Truckers have something that neither Lynyrd Skynyrd nor very many other bands throughout rock history have had: three front men.

Patterson Hood, Mike Cooley, and Jason Isbell each play lead guitar, write songs, and sing lead on those songs which they write. This seems as though it would lead to combating egos and "artistic differences," but the Truckers must

be commended on their ability to make an extremely cohesive and fluid group that features three band leaders who take turns, never stepping on each other's feet.

All three songwriters have very gravelly voices which don't really sound similar to anyone else out there—Cooley, in particular, has a very deep and gruff bellow. Speaking of songwriters, these boys are some of the best out there at the moment. There is not a lot of flash to the sound of the band, but the quality of their songs and the lyrics in them are far above almost any other current band. Of course, the Truckers tend to have a southern flavor in much of their writing—but not in the stereotypical pop-country sense: rather, a rough and experienced take on southern life.

The entire night saw the band switching lead duties on every single song; rarely did one of the three perform two of his own songs in a row. This really says a lot considering that they played at least thirty five songs, including

new tunes such as the beautiful "February 14th" and "Gravity's Gone" off of their latest album *A Blessing And A Curse*. Of course, the Truckers also touched on classic live staples such as "Sinkhole," "Decoration Day," and "Let Their Be Rock."

Rounding out the group was drummer Brad Morgan and bassist Shonna Tucker, both of which fit perfectly to create the Trucker's sound. The unofficial 6th member of the band, John Neff, played some fantastic steel guitar, before switching to electric on the last two songs.

After about five minutes of what had to be the best crowd-produced encore cheer ever, the band emerged to do one encore, and then another, and another. The Truckers played a six song encore in which every song, from soft ballads to gut-busting rockers, would have been a perfect closer. The Drive By Truckers played the best concert that I have ever been to. Period.

CD Review:

by BJ Wanlund
Staff Writer



Despite our Differences
The Indigo Girls
(Hollywood Records, 2006)

The Indigo Girls have returned, bringing more great music to our lives. Their last release, 2004's *All That We Let In*, wasn't their best songwriting overall. Now, their first album with Hollywood Records, *Despite Our Differences*, is here. Unlike *All That We Let In*, it showcases their best songwriting ever. Gems like "Pendulum Swinger" to "Lay My Head Down" and "Three County Highway" make this album, quite possibly, their best yet. There are some cool bonuses that you won't get if you only spring for the 1 CD set—and one bonus in particular that could only be obtained by preordering the album. The 2-CD set has the album on one CD, and features 6 alternate versions of songs on the second disk. Acoustic versions of "Last Tears" and "Fly Away," as well as live versions of "Money Made You Mean," "Little Perennials," "Pendulum Swinger," and "Three County Highway" are probably the best 6 songs on the album. Then there's the preorder bonus: a brand new live performance version of "Closer to Fine," one of their best songs! If you want this bonus, e-mail me at wanlunjw@brevard.edu with the subject line of "Indigo Girls Bonus Track," and I'll try to get it to you. All in all, this is one of the Indigo Girls' best albums yet. *Despite Our Differences* gets a resounding 5 stars.