

A re-juvenated Patrick Wolf reconnects with fans via this personal and 'up-close' Bristol show

GIGsoup don't title reviews but if we did, we would have called this one 'What's Eating Patrick Wolf?' The opening night of the Wild Sound tour marked *Patrick Wolf's* first proper UK tour since the ten year anniversary acoustic shows of 2012 and his first with a rhythm section for years. The days of *Patrick* plus band members hark back his *Magic Position*, major label gigs of 2007/2008, when extravaganzas at the *London Palladium* and *Sheppards Bush Empire* crowned him in glitter but left him burnt out, depressed and disillusioned.

Much has changed since then, both professionally and personally. In the years after leaving a major label, *Wolf* concentrated on just himself, a violinist and multiple instruments on stage, met his partner William and recorded the joyous, romantic *Lupercalia* in 2011. Expectation was high; made all the more exciting for long-time fans by the intimacy of the venue, *The Lantern*, part of Bristol's *Colston Hall*.

Wolf has never disappointed in showcasing an intriguing and unique support act. Over the years we've had the electro-trash of *No Bra* and the authentic New York cabaret of *Mx Justin Bond*. *Wild Sound* support act, *Calpernia Addams* made sure to live up to her predecessors. Hailing from the southern United States, *Calpernia* graced the waiting crowd with her glamorous presence complete with the high camp glamour of any of the best cabaret stars, mixed with an air of *Marianne Faithfull* and *Velvet Underground* muse, *Nico*. Armed with just an auto-harp, her songs were folk stories and tales of a life of religious childhood, of which she broke free. Her lyrics were heartfelt, her stories warm and very funny, it was easy to see why *Wolf* had decided upon her for his re-birth onto the touring circuit.

After *Calpernia* left the stage, the audience waited, the temperature in the room increased, people went to the bar and then waited some more, patiently but with every growing minute something seemed amiss. Finally, forty-five minutes after he was due to be on stage, *Patrick Wolf* appeared, he was not best pleased. Dressed demurely (for *Wolf*) in black jeans, a black t-shirt and holographic platform creepers, he explained, 'hello Bristol, I could tell you about the shit time I've had trying to get here but instead I'll sing a song'. He picked up an acoustic guitar and launched into a stripped down version of *The Magic Position*, from 2006's album of the same name. Once *Wolf* had warmed up, he remembered why he was there, it was as if the crowd had lifted him. His professionalism took over and he played reworked versions of *Teignmouth*, *Hard Times*, which was mixed with new track *Wildsound*.

Choosing to mostly spurn the pop-ier end of his back catalogue, in favour of tracks from his debut *Lycanthropy* (2002) and follow up, the Cornish recorded, *Wind in the Wires* (2005). *Wolf* was self-effacing, even claiming 'I've always thought this one goes on a bit', in the middle of the set. Fresh anecdotes and stories peppered the set, while he tuned the new addition to his musical instrument family, a *Warren Ellis* designed *Eastwood* guitar. *Wolf* claimed, it gives a similar sound to his favoured ukulele, the sleek cherry red number, was more fitting, this was *Patrick Wolf* with added edge.

New rhythm section members, *Drew Campbell* on bass and *Max Lauder* on drums, rounded out the sound for most of the songs, including a country-tinged version of *Get Lost*. It was when *Wolf* played new song *Golden Gate*, after admitting that he lost everything and

subsequently, finds New Year hard, that he was able to shine in a way that is all of Patrick's own.

There was a difference here, this was an artist on top form, whereas the *Wolf* of old may have let the days events affect his performance, he finally seemed at ease to admit things hadn't been easy for him and to showcase other's talents (a superb *To the Lighthouse*, with *Calpernia Addams*) but the stand out moment, was after learning the set had to be cut short, *Wolf* again suggested he could regale us with the tales of his '*very long and difficult day*', as it was clear this was still weighing on his mind. Then he launched into the darkest and most sexual version of *Tristan* ever witnessed. The bass was loud as *Patrick Wolf*, pulsed, paraded and presided over a stage that was all his own, which just goes to show, maybe the title of this review should be, 'good things come to those who wait'.

This Patrick wolf article was written by Jessica Otterwell, a GIGsoup contributor. Photo credit : [thomasszymik](#)