

YEAH YEAH YEAHS
FOX THEATRE
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Island-Life trundled on over to the Fox for the Yeah Yeah Yeahs this past week. The Yeah Yeah Yeahs are a New York City-based indie rock band. The band consists of lead singer Karen O, drummer Brian Chase, and guitarist Nick Zinner. In 2000 they formed a trio, and were later joined by second guitarist Imaad Wasif in 2006 for touring purposes. The band has recorded three studio albums; the first, *Fever to Tell*, was released in 2003. The second, *Show Your Bones*, was released in 2006 and was named the second best album of the year by NME. Their third studio album, *It's Blitz!*, was released on March 31, 2009.

The band was preceded by two warm-up acts, the first of which we missed and the second we wished we had. Yacht consists of two people and a canned band. This sort of thing seems to be getting popular as folks mess around with

cheaper versions of ProTools and Guitar Hero to synth beats that can be replayed from a laptop without the sticky problems of band member personalities, the need to practice one's instruments, and how to divvy up the door take.



Yacht basically impelled one of us to walk out and down two vodka martinis at the bar.

Yacht is about as good as this sort of thing gets, but the reality is that one is watching a couple people prance around on stage in front of moderately interesting arty screen projections, which is only slightly more lively than watching a DJ spin mashups with strobe lighting. The term is "technoclash", a term we are told is not used any more. Well, maybe for a reason. The style is supposed to be *tres* hip. Well, even with physically attractive performers like Jona Bechtolt and Claire Evans, this sort of thing tires quickly. When its bad, it really feels like a terrific waste of time and money. In the case of Yacht, one reviewer

commented "the songs felt flat". Truth is, once you get over the momentary urge of wanted to schtupp the cute performer(s) there is little to hold the attention. At the end of the day, its all visuals and canned music. There is the added piece of the vocals, but the Fox works against anybody in that area with what appears to be truely atrocious accoustics.

That Evans sure is a sexy looker, but we'd like her more if she put her lips to a saxophone or her hands on a set of drums.

We've seen more than a couple shows now at the restored Fox, and we have to conclude that the bad sound is not due to an off night at the mixing board. Sonic mud has been pretty consistently erupting from the speakers there, with the end result of largely unintelligible lyrics no matter how good the band.



In the case of the Yeah Yeah Yeahs, NYC's latest hottie trio plus one, muddy vocals mattered little to an adoring SRO crowd that knew all the lyrics by heart. The sold-out two-night run delivered in spades to a wildly cheering throng with stunning visuals as well as ear-crunching rock.

Karen O is also eminently schtuppable with her Cat Power bangs and her affable New Yawk wierdness, and she also has the moves to watch, but she also is gifted with a powerful voice and some lyrical talent for catchy pop riffs of the sort you want to take home with you. The group looks so impossibly young -- we could never have been like that -- but they are on a roll and it looks like this one has some serious legs. They already know how to vary the dynamics from screeching howl to soft ballad and deliver the material dramatically with Rolling Stones flair.

Instead of Imaad Wasif, there was a female keyboardist/bassist who remained largely unlit through the entire show. Her keys added a significant amount of depth to the music which other reviewers noted, but nobody seems to know her name. If anybody finds out, send a line.



We had a discussion about Karen O's vocal style, with one staffer saying they reminded her of Concrete Blonde, while another said it sounded more like a female Aerosmith fronted by Grace Slick. In retrospect, she owes a lot to Chrissie Hynde of the Pretenders. Whatever. YYY has their own distinctive post-punk sound that puts aside the lumberjack shirts for some serious glitz as these show photos indicate.

"Maps" is the song closest to a hit (it reached #14 in 2003), but the opener off of their newest album, "Runaway", may be the sleeper that rocks this excellent band into the heavy rotation arena.

Setlist from setlist.fm is as follows

Runaway
Phenomena
Man
Dull Life
Gold Lion
Heads Will Roll
Pin
Miles Away
Skeletons
Hysteric
Soft Shock
Honeybears
Zero
ENCORE:
Cheated Hearts
Maps
Date With The Night
Y Control

At the end of "Zero" a cascade of sparkeling confetti snowed down on stage, covering up a triumphant band.



The song "Maps" prompted a mass sing-along, so we provide the lyrics to take with you for your next concert.

Pack up;
I'm straight;
Enough;
Oh say, say, say;
Oh say, say, say;
Oh say, say, say;
Oh say, say, say;
Oh say, say, say

Wait, they don't love you like I love you; wait, they don't love you like I love you;
Ma-a-a-a-a-a-a-a-aps;
Wait! They don't love you like I love you.....

Lay off;
Don't stray;
Well, my kind's, your kind;
I'll stay the same!
Pack up;
Don't stray;
Oh say, say, say;
Oh say, say, say!

Wait! They don't love you like I love you;
wait! They don't love you like I love you;
Ma-a-a-a-a-a-a-a-aps;
Wait! They don't love you like I love you!
wait! They don't love you like I love you!
Ma-a-a-a-a-a-a-a-aps!
Wait! They don't love you like I love you ...
(guitar solo)
Wait! They don't love you like I love you;
And wait! They don't love you like I love you;
Ma-a-a-a-a-a-a-a-aps;
Wait! They don't love you like I love you!
And wait! They don't love you like I love you!
Ma-a-a-a-a-a-a-a-aps!
Wait! They don't love you like I love you ...

