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SURFING THE WAVES OF POPULAR CULTURE
BY MICHAEL GILTZ & FRIENDS

FRIDAY, AUGUST 11, 2006

Candi Staton In Concert

I had a very busy week with movies, book readings and concerts. One definite highlight was [soul singer Candi Staton at the Bowery Ballroom on Thursday night](#). She was in terrific voice and the place was full of fans. It was a mixed crowd but for some reason it was the white people who felt they should sometimes hold their hands in the air as if they were at church and occasionally encourage her on with "Sing it, girl." The set wasn't wholly satisfying -- I would have preferred a much heavier dose of her classic songs on the FAME label -- and her band was fine but not transcendent (which showed during her introduction of the members and their usually uninspired solo turns). But she was sweet and talkative and even gave a shout out to the press, thanking them for their attention. (I don't think I've ever heard a music act thank the press before.) "I'd Rather Be An Old Man's Sweetheart (Than A Young Man's Fool)" was great, as were her covers of Merle Haggard and Elvis Presley and Tammy Wynette. And the gay boys in the crowd loved the finale, which included her big dance hits "Young Hearts Run Free" and "Victim," neither of which is a good showcase for her voice. But the show was entertaining throughout (especially the dorky Argentinian in front of me who would insist on dancing -- I wisely just leaned against the wall and tapped my toes). And her performance of the title track of her new album -- the quietly devastating "His Hands" -- was a showstopper. I can't remember the last time everyone at Bowery Ballroom shut up for a slow number, but this was the sort of performance where even the bartenders stopped serving drinks so they could listen.

POSTED BY MICHAEL IN NEW YORK AT 11:30 AM



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