

Bouchard Rocks the Narrows: Blue Oyster Cult's Bouchard has still got it

Okee dokee folks... Founding member the the 1970's rock band Blue Oyster Cult Albert Bouchard brought his Imaginos and other Cult Classics Tour to The Narrows Center for the Arts this past Saturday night. BOC was known for such songs as "Burnin' For You", "Godzilla", "Astronomy" and of course, "Don't Fear The Reaper"- one that had Saturday Night Live parodying Bouchard's cowbell performance. Bouchard took the route of Nirvana/Foo Fighters Dave Grohl, drummer to guitar/singer/bandleader, only a decade earlier than Grohl, when Bouchard left BOC in the early 80's.

Bouchard made a grand stage entrance dressed in a red sequined jacket and bright red trousers to music performed by his backing band. The line-up included: Cyzon Griffin: drums, Joe Bouchard (brother and also a former BOC member): keys, trumpet, piccolo, and vocals, Mike Fornatale: guitar and vocals and David Hirschberg: bass and vocals. Bouchard laughed, "I paid a hundred bucks for this jacket!" They then attempted to launch into the set but after a false start Bouchard remarked, "We're going to do that a lot!" They continued with what would be a two-and-a-half hour set of Bouchard's and Blue Oyster Cult tunes. About 150 very dedicated BOC/Bouchard fans filled the seats of the Narrows Center. Bouchard exclaimed after adjusting his notebook on the floor, "I have to make sure I sing the right words because I know a lot of you are going to be singing along." The band performed the entire concept album Imaginos in order and in its entirety. Some of the music, they commented, had not yet been performed live. The band was rocking, albeit a bit rough around the edges. The style merged straight ahead rock with a bit of prog rock. A few songs included solos on trumpet and piccolo by brother Joe and he also brought out a Djembe with cowbells during the BOC cut, "Rock and Roll." He was joined by Albert who strapped on a marching band drum and along with Cyzon Griffin had themselves a drum troupe moment. The drumming signaled set's end and the band remained onstage to take a three song encore. They invited guitarist/vocalist Joan Levy Hepburn, who had been waiting in the wings all night, to join them. The grand finale was their version of "Don't Fear The Reaper."

The opening performer, Paul Bielatowicz, was a surprise treat. Bielatowicz, who is best known for touring in Carl Palmer's ELP Legacy Band has also performed with YES, Todd Rundgren, John Lodge and The Alan Parsons Project. Before the show Narrows director Patrick Norton had mentioned to me about Paul Bielatowicz's upcoming set, "This guy is really good." On stage was an acoustic guitar on a playing stand, a Theremin, a Moog synth, an electric guitar and a computer. There was a movie screen pulled down as a backdrop and Nosferatu was emblazoned in light across it. I wasn't sure what to expect. Bielatowicz got on stage and remarked, "One can never be sure whether to put the cape or the microphone on first." He then went on to explain that he had written music for the 1922 silent film Nosferatu and was going to perform the first two acts accompanying the film. Some of the music was looped and some was pre-programmed into the computer and this gave Bielatowicz a full band sound when needed. The style ranged from solo acoustic, finger picked music to Bielatowicz shredding Eddie Van Halen style with the sound of a full band behind him. Only two acts of the film and music were not quite enough. I honestly wanted to hear more. It was very different and quite enjoyable and definitely worth checking out if you have the opportunity.

Bouchard and band as well as Paul Bielatowicz hung out by the merch table and chatted with eager fans afterwards. You can check out my photographs from this show on the Motif Facebook page. Meta over

to: [Facebook.com/MotifRI](https://www.facebook.com/MotifRI). Shows at the Narrows are always a fun and satisfying experience! Check out what is coming up! Bridge over to: [NarrowsCenter.org](https://www.NarrowsCenter.org)

That's it for now. Thanks for reading. www.JohnFuzek.com