

# Gov't Mule's Haynes a proven guitar warhorse

By **BRETT MILANO**

Warren Haynes doing a soul show isn't that much different from Warren Haynes doing a rock show. In either case, you're going to get a lot of blazing slide guitar and gritty, gospel-infused singing. And you're going to get a house full of devotees hanging on the North Carolina guitarist's every note.

All were present Friday night, including the devoted crowd. After the umpteenth cry of "We love you Warren!" Haynes asked, "How come it's always the guys who yell that?" He's already hit Boston in the past year with Gov't Mule and the Allman Brothers Band, and now he's touring behind his solo album "Man in Motion." It's his old-school soul album, with stronger emphasis on the vocals, but it still nods to Mule's brand of heavy rock and to the Allmans' free-flowing guitar grooves.

Friday's show — a full three hours, including a solo acoustic opening to the second set — found Haynes at his most relaxed. Instead of playing wall-to-wall guitar solos, he preferred to groove with his band, trading leads with sax man Ron Holloway and keyboardist Nigel Hall. (There were no surprise guests, though Aerosmith's Brad Whitford joined the band in New York earlier in

the week.) The new songs gave him a few chances to open up and testify. "River's Gonna Rise" had a church-like feel and "Real Lonely Night" and "Sick of My Shadow" are lovelorn ballads with a deep-blue emotional tone. Both showed an uncharacteristic vulnerable side, as did the acoustic cover of the Eagles ballad "Wasted Time."

The second set got closer to Allman/Mule territory, as the songs stretched out and took surprising detours ("Take a Bullet" flowed into a cover of the Staples Singers' "I'll Take You There," putting co-singer Ruthie Foster upfront). During "I'll Be the One," he gave Allman Brothers fans a quick fix by quoting the guitar

solo from "Blue Sky." And the set closed with his signature tune: "Soulshine," a gospel rouser that he's played with nearly every band he's had.

As a display of soul and guitar chops, this night didn't disappoint. Still, you have to wish Haynes would push the soul concept a little bit further. Why not hire string and horn players, give the guitar a break, venture out of the comfort zone and go for it vocally? Friday's show proved Haynes is certainly good enough to carry that off.

## MUSIC REVIEW

### WARREN HAYNES

At the Orpheum Theatre, Friday night.



**THREE-HOUR TOUR: Warren Haynes played a long show.**

