

COMPILED BY DEAN BUDNICK

## Scene & Heard

# Soundcheck

LIVE REVIEWS AND NEWS FROM AROUND THE GLOBE



Haynes leading his new solo project through a set of R&B covers and solo classics

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### Warren Haynes Band

Beacon Theatre  
 New York, NY

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**M**UCH OF THE MATERIAL on the Warren Haynes Band's new *Man In Motion* wouldn't seem out of place in a Gov't Mule show. For all of the emphasis on old-school soul and R&B, that's still territory familiar to the eclectic Mule. So, while the two sets of music from this ensemble and its reliably passionate leader were fun, at times, the show felt like a loose, side project-style jam session.

There's nothing wrong with that, of course, and what was

great about the band's Beacon Theatre tour kick-off was the setlist hodgepodge. *Motion* tunes were the focus throughout the three hours and two sets. The strongest cuts on the album were also the strongest ones live as the band expanded them with spicy improvisation. But during the course of the evening, Haynes drew material from almost all of his previous endeavors, including his earlier solo career.

There was a four-song stretch of acoustic Warren to kick off the second set that included the much-missed "The Real Thing," a tune recorded with Phil Lesh & Friends a decade ago. For the longtime Warren lovers who've cycled through 1993's *Tales of Ordinary Madness* album more

than a few times, there were killer takes on "Fire in the Kitchen" and "Power and the Glory," both good fits for this ensemble.

The band could benefit from more time to develop its chemistry, and right now, it's still an assemblage of top flight players rising to the occasion but, at least as often, respectfully deferring to their leader and not coloring too far outside the lines. Ron Holloway's scorching sax is an always-welcome Warren counterpoint, but the show could've used more of Nigel Hall's vocal and keys—practically sedate here compared to his usual raging with Soulive—and a hell of a lot more of Ruthie Foster's singing. The moments where Ruthie and Warren were dueting or harmoniz-

ing—a chilling "Grinnin' in Your Face"—to kick off the encore segment was stunning—helped spotlight this band's emerging strengths.

Were there guests? Well, of course. Mule's Danny Louis sat in for a few, Aerosmith's Brad Whitford appeared at the end for a gnarly guitar battle with Warren, and the great soul singer William Bell stole the show by sharing three of his own classics—"Born under a Bad Sign," "You Don't Miss Your Water" and one song that Warren recorded for *Motion*, "Every Day Will Be Like a Holiday." Bell's wide grin and hearty hug with Warren at the end of the first set seemed to capture the show's vibe: comfortable, familial, easy-going and warm. *Chad Berntson*

Dino Perrucci