



House of Floyd, January 20, 2007 at The Uptown.
by: Danielle Finger

The moment G.G. Tanaka told me that he'd be opening for the House of Floyd at The Uptown Bar and Night Club on Telegraph in Oakland, I spread the word immediately. I knew that the combination of an outstanding Pink Floyd cover performance and a perfectly intimate live music venue would deliver an experience to remember. And we weren't disappointed!

Setting the stage, literally, was Uptown. They set up their space so that you felt you were in an underground Manhattan club. You first entered into a gorgeous bar loaded with everything you could want to drink; at the end of the bar was a dark maroon movie curtain, through which you emerged into the show room with a three foot elevated stage. This room was set up so that the left half was for standing and dancing, and the right half had tables and chairs for schmoozing and drinking - thus it accommodated everyone's needs, especially those who had to run up to the stage as their favorite song came up!

G.G.'s opening set-list started with Johnny Cash's "Folsom Prison Blues", and went all over the board including a spontaneous dedication of Violent Femmes' "Kiss Off" to which the crowd joined in the chorus, David Bowie's "Ziggy Stardust", Edie Brickell's "Circle," the sing-a-long Lowenbrau commercial and an original Non-Irish/Irish song of his own: "Jagerbombs for Everyone, Hey!" Of course, he finished this song raising

a Jagerbomb and toasting the crowd! G.G. even snuck in the Pink Floyd song not on House of Floyd's play-list, "Nobody's Home". By the end of his set nearly all were clapping to the beat and grooving to his rustic and soulful style! The crowd demanded an encore and he came back with Jimi Hendrix's "Manic Depression"! G.G. undoubtedly has the incredible ability to wholeheartedly engage the audience with his musical presence.

Those who had never seen the House of Floyd live before, were on the edge of their seats intoxicated with anticipation. Well, even those of us who had seen them, we were on the edge of our seats too. Mark Showalter crept on stage and used the keyboards to give us a glimpse of what was in store by tempting us with Pink Floyd sound effects, and slowly the band members followed and took the stage, joining Showalter one at a time - Pat Potter on guitar and Lou Portela on bass, Doug Canfield on drums and Bill Coonley on keyboards and guitar, and Angie Montgomery and Sheri Showalter with their soulful voices - so that when House of Floyd was on stage "Shine on You Crazy Diamond Part I" was in full effect. Instantly, we were swept up in the moment and seemed to scream and applaud as if we were one voice and one pair of hands. "Shine On... Part I" has about an 8 minute intro, and was performed flawlessly! On a screen behind the band were stars in warp-speed overlapped by a light show, which at that time was a super-sized lava lamp melting in blues and teals. Charlie Lopez mastered the video, Liquid Pete orchestrated the liquid/gel lights and laser show and Jack Warner dominated the running lights. House of Floyd brought it! ALL!

I was sitting with a couple major Pink Floyd fans who hadn't

previously had the pleasure of seeing the House of Floyd. Closing their eyes they admitted that it was extremely difficult to differentiate between the live Pink Floyd shows and what they were experiencing at that moment. Not an easy feat by any means.

House of Floyd mixed up the albums and their songs which ranged from "Animals", "The

Division Bell", "The Wall", "Relics", "A Saucerful of Secrets", "Dark Side of the Moon", "A Momentary Lapse of Reason", "Wish You Were Here" and "Meddle". One never knew what to expect next. The first few chords would expertly provide a build-up then would lay into the song and enliven the crowd. House of Floyd is diligent, the coordination of the laser show, video, fog, lights and incense, the vocals, sax, guitars, drums, bass and keyboards were all timed perfectly. Let's just say, we were never deprived of the multi-dimensional essence of Pink Floyd, for House of Floyd ignited all five senses! Well, Uptown sufficiently provided the beer and spirits for taste.

By the end of the evening, which turned into morning, the crowd still wanted more. We stomped and clapped in unison, shouted and whistled relentlessly, until House of Floyd returned to the stage for an encore performance. They graced us with "Comfortably Numb", to which most people got out of their seats, stood arm in arm and swayed to the rhythm of the song. Wish You Were (T)Here, huh?

Pink Floyd enthusiast or not, you're sure to become a fan of House of Floyd and G.G. Tanaka. They both put on a spectacular show which was confirmed by the full house which consisted of those of the age of 21 to those in their

60's, proving, the next generation is hungry for the Pink Floyd experience! The seasoned fans were pleased to see the fresh appreciation for the greatest band in the history of rock and roll!

Clearly, I haven't scratched the surface of the wisdom and accomplishments of the individual members of talented House of Floyd, which is unbelievably impressive and worth reading about. Please check out their website for more information on availability and listings, and their tempting morsels of their sound at houseoffloyd.com. G.G. Tanaka can be found at myspace.com/ggtanaka and The Uptown at uptownnightclub.com. Rock On!