

## Brainwashed - Wire, NYC South Street Seaport, May 30

Written by Craaig Dunton

Sunday, 01 June 2008 07:01 - Last Updated Monday, 02 June 2008 02:47

---

The setting was somewhat odd: some 3,000+ persons at a free concert right on New York City's South Street Seaport. Surely a bulk of those there had never actually heard of Wire, but there were at least more than a few of us who drove quite a distance for the free, one-off show to promote the band's upcoming *Object 47* album. Unsurprisingly, the show just proved that even with the continuation their 30+ year career, Wire remain more relevant and captivating than most of the musicians out making records today.

The show marked the first in the States with guitarist Margaret Fiedler McGinnis (Laika/Moonshake) who definitely held her own replacing Bruce Gilbert. It was a different visual aesthetic than the lanky Gilbert calmly standing by his amplifier, but her energetic performance was excellent at, and I for one would be interested to see how she'd be as an actual "full" member of the band.

Just shy of the 30th anniversary of their first US show, Wire did a run through of pretty much their entire body of work. Four tracks from the upcoming *Object 47* were featured, including the "single" "One of Us" that's been up on the band's website for a few weeks now. Live it came across as a bit less pop and more aggressive, with the added bonus of a dual chorus from Lewis and Newman. The other tracks, "All Fours," "Mekon Headman," and "Perspex Icon" had a similar, more pop oriented bent that "One of Us" has, though knowing Wire it could be even more radically different on the actual album. Other 21st century era material got a strong run through as well, recent tracks like "Our Time" and especially "I Don't Understand" received especially vitriolic treatments.

It was nice to hear that even some of the occasionally (unfairly) maligned '80s material was performed here: "Advantage in Height" and "Boiling Boy" received nicely revised performances that felt more contemporary and updated, but still faithful to the original. If nothing else, it was a testament to the timelessness of the band's work.

The crowd was decidedly mixed between those older folks who cheered loudly at the opening notes of "Boiling Boy" and joined along with Graham Lewis' infectious chorus to "Being Sucked In Again." Others were younger kids who were obviously just there for the spectacle, and unfortunately could have been watching some awful hack band and not have known the difference.

Of course there was a lot of the original *Pink Flag* represented, "106 Beats That," "Lowdown," and "12XU" sounded just as fresh and unique as they did some 31 years ago, and the second encore of "Pink Flag" ended with a ferocity bands half of their age wish they could muster on their best nights.

Even though an unfortunate proportion of those in attendance were probably just there since it was free, or were obnoxious hipsters who downloaded "12XU" and thought they

## Brainwashed - Wire, NYC South Street Seaport, May 30

Written by Creag Dunton

Sunday, 01 June 2008 07:01 - Last Updated Monday, 02 June 2008 02:47

---

knew everything and were there to add to their indie cred, those who were more familiar were surely satisfied as I was, and that if it is just a precursor for a full fledged tour in October, it should be a must-see. Unfortunately for Brainwashed leader Jon Whitney, they didn't play "Drill," and I didn't get to hear an updated rendition of "Crazy About Love," but I think we were both satiated.