

THIS WEEK IN BLOWING YOU AWAY

GYPSY SOUL



Several months ago, my friend Dee invited me to see cool gal duo the Naked Eye play down at the Coach House. I knew the girls, knew they were good, and thus trudged my very tired self out to see them. Well, I trudged so tiredly I actually missed them—caught only the last song—but since I was there, I settled in with a margarita and took in the rest of the roster. Everything was going well enough, when from out of the darkness, a single spotlight shone on a creature one usually only glimpses on the other side of an Elizabethan portrait: dark spiral locks; porcelain skin; features of elegant, earthy, Goth muffinness. The word that ran on a loop in my mind? Haaawttt. Then she opened her mouth, and my gaping jaw became unhinged.

Thus was my introduction to the rhythmic, string-based Celtic-y lush Gypsy Soul, a duo that should have been a household word by now. But as we find so often in these days of corporate pop and big brother radio, if you can't payola, you can't playola, and that must be the reason you've missed one of the most brilliantly instrumented and vocally adept bands alive and kicking. Not only is front woman Cilette Swann running neck 'n' neck with other ethereal princesses Sarah McLachlan, Loreena McKennitt and Miss Dido, but she also often trumps them because she's got that tinge of—hold on to yourself—Grace *Slickness* in her voice and range that makes for one robustly throaty experience. Roman Morykit, the genius on guitar and production, is not just backup fodder—he's intrinsically important to the sound makeup, plucking out complex original material and arranging covers so uniquely that even their Christmas album is the stuff of everyday ear fare.

This exquisite duo will be playing a cozy acoustic show arranged especially for them by the Coach House this Sunday. What else can I say? Be there or be a big, fat idiot.

Gypsy Soul, the Journey and Ben Taylor at the Coach House, 33157 Camino Capistrano, San Juan Capistrano, (949) 496-8930; www.thecoachhouse.com. Sun., 7 p.m. \$12.50.

—Stacy Davies