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REVIEW: Missing QOTSA not so bad when Shooter's in town

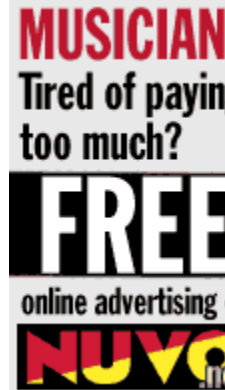
Story by Jeff Napier - Photos by Stephen Cohen -

Oct. 13 @ Music Mill

Wednesday night was a rough one for me. I wanted to go see Queens of the Stone Age, but I haven't felt right about supporting them since Nick Oliveri exited the band. Besides, the whole set-up of the show, with tickets being given out by corporate fucks (X-103 and Bud) that really have no regard for music unless there's money to be made, really made Queens Of The Stone Age look like corporate fuck tools. Still, had I known there were tix to be had at the last minute, I would have went simply to see how Josh Homme could possibly fill Oliveri's boots.

Instead I stuck with the back-up plan and went to see Shooter Jennings at the Music Mill. No matter what you say about QOTSA's show and how good it was, Shooter showed up and brought the rock with him too. And it was the better show, because it was at a cool venue, The Music Mill, and it wasn't controlled by corporate fucks. And Shooter, Son of Waylon Jennings and Jesse Colter, knows how to bring the rock.

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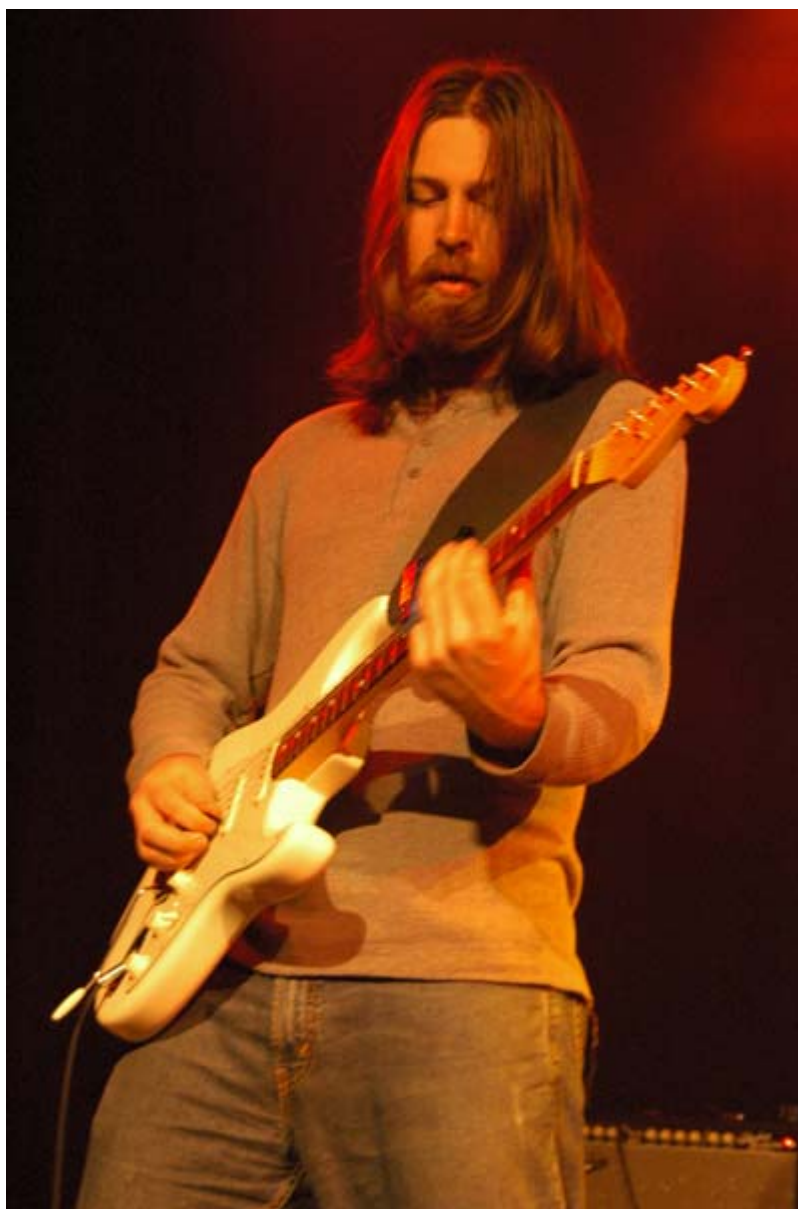
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Originally a L.A. cock rocker with a band called Stargunn, Shooter started dabbling in the kind of outlaw country that his dad made back in the day just a couple years ago. His backing band, the 357's are as top-notch as any band out there and tighter then a hillbilly's asshole in a gay bar. When they came on the stage at The Music Mill they owned it and the crowd from the get-go.

They certainly looked like outlaws, all denim, beards and long hair. They paid tribute to daddy by turning in stellar readings of "Lonesome Orn'ry and Mean" and "Are You Sure Hank Done it This Way." Beyond all that, Shooter and the 357's took the blueprint and went on their own path.



Leroy Powell, the tall, Jesus-looking lead guitar freak was a sight to behold, anchoring the show with his lightening picking on both the electric and slide, while the vaguely nü-metally looking drummer and Jimmy Page circa '74 look-a-like Bassist locked down a solid groove. They turned in a rocking set that was rollicking, assured and slightly deranged, taking Shooter wherever he wanted to go.



Of course, Shooter was the main attraction. While his voice has a bit of Waylon's husk, there more going on: a bit of Axl here and bit of George Jones there, maybe a bit of David Allen Coe on the side. And he knew his guitar very well, whether picking on his old man's iconic leather-tooled fender or thrashing on a big ol' Flying V. But his songs where at the heart and soul of what made this show so good.

Starting off with a killer 123 combo "Put The O back in Country," "Solid Gold Country" and "Fourth of July" Shooter had the Biker dudes with the Waylon patches rocking as hard as he did the well-scrubbed singing-a-long holding beers up high Big and Rich fans. "Manifesto No. 1" with lines like "Let your hair down / Get out of that skirt / But leave them high heels on / I'll be in back of my Black Cadillac / When Jesus finally comes to call his children home," and the poignant "Southern Comfort" united a room full of rockers, Quality Farm and Fleet shopping Waylon fans, bikers, and straight-up nü-country fans. Such union is not an easy feat for any artist, yet Shooter pulled it off

effortlessly.



Josh Homme might have rocked the Vogue that night, but he did so in the interest of corporate America. Shooter Jennings rocked the house at the Music Mill that same night and he did so in his daddy's memory and also in taking back country music and making it dangerous again.

Homme might have a few years left in him and a few more miles left in the QOTSA, but he is clearly ready and willing to sell out. Shooter Jennings demonstrated a love of his craft, a heady talent, and clear readiness to say "fuck you" to anybody who doesn't like what he's doing.

Long Live Shooter. Down with Queens of The Stone Age.



-- Jeff Napier --

Related Link: <http://www.shooterjennings.com>

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