

Concert Review: KINGS OF LEON WORLD TOUR 2009



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Artist: Kings of Leon
Date: April 21st 2009
Venue: Air Canada Centre
City: Toronto ON



Reviewed By: Amanda Wenek (Toronto)

On Tuesday night the Air Canada Centre reverberated with the sounds of hands clapping and feet stomping, the sold-out crowd cheering excitedly as Kings of Leon strolled onto the stage.

This marked the band's second Toronto stop in only five months; they were last here in November during a North American and European tour. Now, they are once again in the midst of a world tour, but, regardless of having been on the road non-stop for the past six months, they were in top-notch shape and played a dazzling two-hour set.

The show opened with the song 'Crawl', from their latest album *Only by the Night*, and singer Caleb Followill's voice was bang-on from the minute he got on stage to the moment he left it; never a note straying, his unique sound permeating the large stadium. His band mates- brothers Nathan (drummer) and Jared (bass) and their cousin Matthew (lead guitar)- also performed with gusto and flair all night long.

The lighting was bright then ominous in all the right places, adding to the ambience of the night, the boys were playful and smooth, making all the boys wish they were as cool and all the girls swoon, and the sound was as tight as what's found on the CD. There were no bells and whistles for this show; the music, the talent, the performance, they spoke for themselves.

The cheering was non-stop during the entire set, and erupted into a thunderous roar as fans demanded an encore when the band left the stage after playing for only an hour. They came back on within minutes and played another slew of songs; the encore being just as long as the first part of the show.

The set included almost every song off *Only by the Night*, including crowd favourites 'Sex on Fire', 'Use Somebody' and 'Closer', as well as almost every song from their third album, *Because of the Times*, such as 'Knocked Up', 'Charmer', 'Fans', and 'On Call'. They also played some oldies but goodies, including 'California Waiting' and 'Taper Jean Girl'. Most fans knew every word to every song, proving the dedicated followers Kings has had since their first full-length release in 2003, *Youth and Young Manhood*.

The boys lived up to the rock star image portrayed in their latest music video, *Use Somebody*. Caleb, drinking wine and dancing during musical breaks; Matthew, playing his guitar with his teeth when he wasn't chain smoking cigarettes; Jared, making all of the girls scream with his bedroom eyes and come-hither looks; and Nathan, blowing bubblegum bubbles in between sips from a beer.

The only downside to the show? There were many overly aggressive fans on the floor. A lot of pushing and yelling at other concert-goers occurred all evening, all in an effort to get the best view of the show, and many people were smoking cigarettes and flicking the still-lit remnants into the crowd; one zoomed by my face, landing inches in front of my feet. One fan even threw her bra on stage and proceeded to flash the band, but, contrary to their rock star personas, none of the Followills paid any attention to her.

Luckily, the music and the performance successfully overshadowed all of this nonsense and distraction, and this was one of the best live shows I have seen in a long while. Kings of Leon are, indeed, the reigning kings of rock.