



FRIDAY, 10 JUNE 2011

The Impossible Gentlemen @ The Sage, Gateshead

Gig of the year so far, was the consensus of many and it certainly is a contender. I absolutely adored the CD but live! Within the intimate confines of Hall Two it was something else.

Like so many good things it began with a 'calm before the storm' feel as Mike Walker gently picked his way around his axe. Enter piano, increasing the tension, showing us the way. Bass and drums change gear and suddenly! - we've got lift-off. No problem here at The Sage - Houston.

Walker is a guitar deity - so says Mark Williams, himself not unknown among the guitarati A list.

Walker can be sublime and smooth or rugged and rockfaced he knows exactly when to go into overdrive and he does it within an acceptable rate of decibels.

Simcock is a pianist with technique to spare. Jarrett, Hancock maybe even a touch of Czerny are all in a mix that comes out as pure Simcock. A phenomenal player.

Adam Nussbaum - a powerhouse behind the kit swinging, driving soloing adding his voice to the quartet keeping the ship afloat.

Steve Swallow - laid-back and understated during the first set he displayed more authority in the second with a couple of compositions and some tasteful soloing. A harmonic rock.

Four great musicians and an even greater band.

For the record Level One was full and Level Two was also populated. One chap I spoke to had travelled from Wrexham to hear the band. I'm sure he thought it was worth the trip.