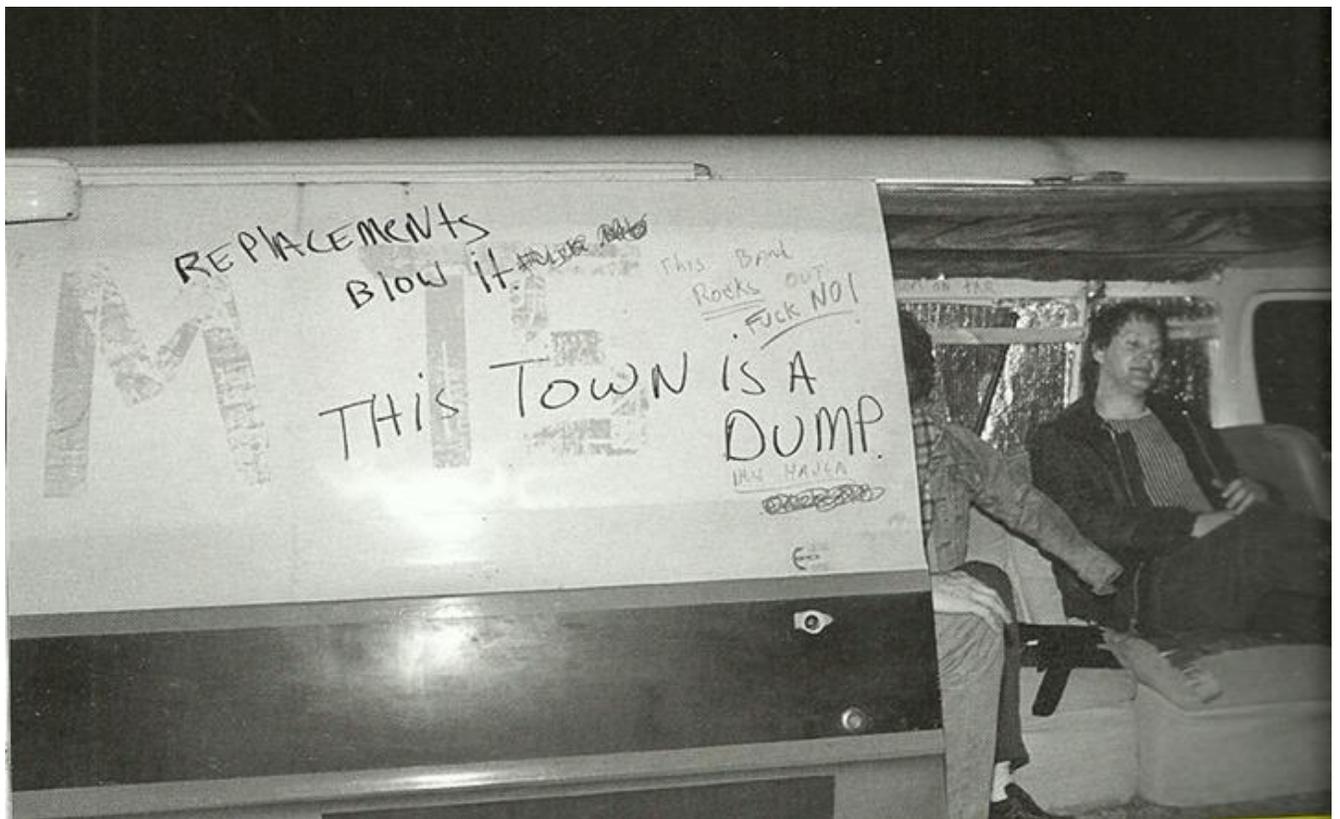


**the // skyway **
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DOSE OF THUNDER

For anyone now or in twenty years who wants to read the excitement of what it was like to be a Replacements fan in the first six months of 2015, this is for you.

This issue is solely about the concerts the Replacements played in the first half of 2015.* Reading through them all at once is like reliving the anticipation I had waking up each morning to find about each packed show the night before, looking for every review and recording someone posted to find out what songs they played, what props were on/thrown off stage, and Paul's hilarious stage banter.

I wish I had the chance to see more of these shows. For the last five years, I'd been a high school teacher and scuba instructor on the island of Malta. The curse of being a teacher is that you have lots of holidays but no vacation days, so I wasn't able to make it to any of the shows in the U.S. – but I was ecstatic to hear when the Replacements were finally playing in Europe. The reviews I wrote immediately after the shows in Barcelona and Amsterdam are here, and both nights blew away whatever expectations had built up after two decades since I had last seen Paul Westerberg and Tommy Stinson play together on a stage.

Right now, I'm unpacking after moving to Barcelona. Moving from an island to another country, especially with four parrots, was a lot of paperwork - which is why this issue didn't come out sooner. But this is coming out just days after the anniversary of the Replacements' first reunion show in Toronto on August 25, 2013, which is also the day that *Sorry Ma, Forgot To Take Out The Trash* came out in 1981. Serendipity! (No, I just finally got stuff sorted out with the internet provider.) So this issue is how I spent the last week of my summer vacation – all for the cause!

After this, I gotta go find some soundproofing so I don't get evicted. (That's the result of having pets in an apartment that have evolved to yell for their friends across an entire rainforest.) Next time I'll tell you what it's like to live in the European country that loves guitar rock the most!

- m@.

* - Another Skyway issue with interviews, fan letters, and stories from 1980-2013 is coming!

THE REPLACEMENTS IN 2015

After three Riotfest shows in 2013, playing every major US festival, and headlining shows in their hometown of Minneapolis/St. Paul and New York in 2014, the Replacements finally gave what the fans had been asking for: a headlining club tour. Starting in Seattle, the “BACK BY UNPOPULAR DEMAND” tour sold out nearly every date until their final US show in Philadelphia before playing in Europe for the first time in nearly a quarter of a century.

An interview by Gary Graff of *the Oakland Press* with **Tommy Stinson** at the beginning of this tour **explained why it took 22 years for the band to come back together:**

“We’ve talked about (stuff) for ... 10 years, about doing this or that or the other thing . . . We had a goofy couple years where it was like, ‘Do we do it? Do we not? What do you think?’, that kind of (stuff) back and forth. And finally it was, ‘Let’s ... do it.’”

But Stinson adds that, even then, bringing back the ‘Mats, as fans call the band, was “a daunting prospect to think about” for him and frontman Paul Westerberg.

“It was kind of like, ‘What do you do? Do you make a record? Who makes records anymore? Do you do a ... digital EP and put it up on iTunes? It’s hard to get (excited) about such a thing when you don’t know how to put anything out anymore. There was just so much to wrap your head around.”

The catalyst for the reunion was a stroke suffered by guitarist Slim Dunlap during 2012, which got Stinson and Westerberg together for a benefit covers EP, “Songs For Slim.”
<http://www.theoaklandpress.com/article/20150429/ENTERTAINMENT/150429394>

Uncut magazine’s May 2015 issue had a revealing interview with the band and **the moment that led to the reunion:**

"Slim's doing poorly," Westerberg reports today. "He can't move, he can't speak. He hasn't eaten for three years, so he's hooked up to tubes. I walk the dog over and visit him every couple of weeks, and I get a smile out of him, and a little whisper, and I put my ear to his lips. You think you have it bad, and then you go and see him and you go, 'All of my troubles are insignificant.' That's part of the reason we got together. Not so much the making money, but for the reason that we could - we can stand, and we can play. Whether we're good or not is irrelevant. When I visited the hospital, a year or two ago when he could still speak, I asked him, 'What should we do, man? Should we play?' He looked at me right in the eye, and he said, 'Yes, go play.' There were tears. I felt like, 'All right then. Who am I to say no?' It was frightening. I mean, I fought it in my mind. Because I had told myself I was done doing that. And I guess that in a way was liberating. To say, 'Stop taking life so seriously, and change your damn mind, and go out and do it again.'"

Tommy Stinson: "The weird thing is I was here in Hudson, New York, where I live, in a little bar down by the train station, and I was sitting there thinking if some other stuff, having kind of a shitty day. Either before or after Paul's call, I was hearing this music playing, and thinking, 'What the fuck is that?' We talked about doing the shows, and then I heard it was a cover version of 'Can't Hardly Wait', I think it was by Evan Dando [of the Lemonheads] or someone. I thought, 'Oh shit, that's some creepy cosmic thing [telling me] to go do it.'"

The interview also talked about **how difficult it was for the band to try to record new material** when they got together in the studio in October 2014:

"Difficult is putting it mildly," adds Stinson. "There's the obstacle of fighting with yourselves about the way it's supposed to feel, to make it a true 'Mats song. We know what that feeling is. We've felt it a lot onstage in the last year. He and I have completely different problems with it in the studio. Paul's got a few really great songs that he's sitting on. But it's hard for him to compete with his Replacements legacy, and I think that gets in his head too much. For me, I want it to be as fucking balls-out as it can be, and if it's not going to be as balls-out, it's got to be very special. We hold it very precious in different ways."

About this tour, Paul Westerberg said, "I don't think playing 10 more times is going to ruin the legend," Westerberg wryly concludes. "And if it does, I don't give a shit."

The Replacements in 2015 remained as they were since 2013: Paul Westerberg and Tommy Stinson with members from the backing band of Westerberg's first solo tour in 1993 for *14 Songs* - Dave Minehan playing guitar and Josh Freese playing drums (and bassist Darren Hill is now Paul Westerberg and the band's co-manager.) If you never saw that highly anticipated first Westerberg tour, just two summers after the Replacements first broke up in 1991, here's an electrifying performance of "**Left of the Dial**" from their **July 22, 1993** show in Los Angeles to show you how great they were 20 years ago too: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wdIsB5FINDg&hd=1>

9 APRIL 2015 - Seattle, WA (Paramount Theater) w/ The Young Fresh Fellows

The first song of the tour started with the band playing “Seen Your Video” in a completely dark theater and behind the curtain. **Megan** said the crowd began to think they were going to play the *entire* show that way. (Her blog entry about the show is at <http://antiquitea.net/2015/04/>.) Eventually the curtain raised on cue with the vocals halfway through the song to rapturous cheers. A video of the surprise entrance for the opening night of the tour is at http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B4_i5dy_nko&hd=1.

Also, Paul whipped out a tent on stage, which he sat in while singing “Androgynous”.



photo: Megan

Set list:

Seen Your Video - Color Me Impressed - Never Mind - I Will Dare - Kiss Me on the Bus - Nobody - 20th Century Boy & Bang a Gong (Get It On) (both T-Rex covers, sung by Dave Minehan) - All Shook Down - Anywhere's Better Than Here - Treatment Bound (with the altered lyric "The label wanted a hit and I'm still working on it") - Androgynous (sung from a tent on stage) - I'll Be You - Take Me Down to the Hospital - Sixteen Blue - The Ledge - Maybellene (Chuck Berry cover, partial) - Tommy Gets His Tonsils Out - I'm In Trouble - Kissing in Action (Tommy Stinson played the intro to Iron Man by Black Sabbath at the end) - Left of the Dial - Valentine - Waitress in the Sky - Within Your Reach - Can't Hardly Wait - Bastards of Young - My Boy Lollipop (Barbie Gaye cover, partial) - If Only You Were Lonely (a request, abandoned after first verse/chorus)

Encore: Ghost On The Canvas (Paul solo on acoustic guitar) - Suzanne (Leonard Cohen cover played by Paul solo on acoustic guitar) - Skyway (Paul solo on acoustic guitar) - Alex Chilton

Recording: <http://replacementslivearchive.blogspot.com/2015/04/april-9-2015-paramount-theatre-seattle.html>

10 APRIL 2015 – Portland, OR (Crystal Ballroom) w/ The Young Fresh Fellows

There was even more anticipation than usual about this show: the last time these two bands played together in this town in 1987, it became an infamous story of the swinging from chandeliers, throwing couches out the window, and passing out on stage.

If you've never heard this story before, read this to your kids, *right now*:

<http://www.thestranger.com/blogs/slog/2015/04/09/22022011/scott-mccaughey-tells-the-sordid-history-of-the-replacements-young-fresh-fellows-alliance-also-a-word-about-reunion-haters>

And this too: http://www.wweek.com/portland/article-24346-swingin_party.html

It all led to the Replacements song named after the city and a written apology inscribed on the inner groove of the vinyl of *Don't Tell a Soul*.

The bands didn't ignore the historical reference tonight – the Replacements played part of "Portland" in the middle of "Talent Show" and the Young Fresh Fellows covered Slim Dunlap's "Loud Loud Loud Guitars".

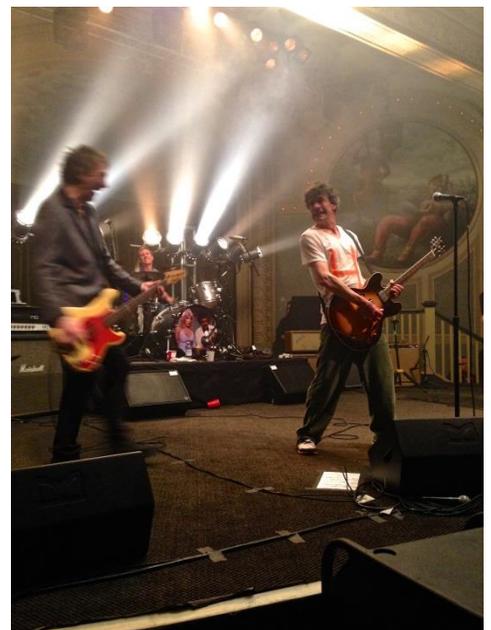
Matthew Singer of *Willamette Week* (which also has some great photos by Colin McLaughlin):

No one threw a couch out a window. No one needed to get stitches. Everyone's clothes stayed on, and the chandelier hanging above the venue floor survived unscathed. But it was still the Replacements—or, at least, Paul Westerberg and Tommy Stinson playing the Replacements, which is good enough for me. And, as much as one could hope or expect in 2015, the show at the Crystal Ballroom on Friday night was everything a Replacements show should be. It was loose. It was indulgent. It was imperfect. It was great. http://www.wweek.com/portland/blog-33065-live_review_the_repl.html

Craig Wright at Portland's *Daily Emerald* captured the feeling of a renewed band:

Taking the stage of the Crystal Ballroom in Portland to "Surfin' Bird" blaring over the loudspeakers, the band opened with "Takin' A Ride" from their 1981 debut album *Sorry Ma, Forgot To Take Out The Trash*. A stunned crowd quickly realized the goal of the night was to break the "Portland curse" that contributed to the alleged worst Replacements show in history at the Pine Street Theater in 1987

Many of Westerberg's songs are about alienation, not fitting in, or simply being bored. Through these classic songs, he has created a home for all of the "Bastards Of Young" who have ever shared similar feelings of solitude.



... for the doubters who may think The Replacements are either too old, or that the reunion doesn't count because drummer Chris Mars chose not to partake, guitarist Dave Minehan and drummer Josh Freese are no longer replacement Replacements. They are the failsafe anchors who have filled the large shoes vacated by founding members Bob Stinson and Chris Mars, as well as former guitarist Slim Dunlap who is in long term care at the hospital following a debilitating stroke.

Westerberg was focused and unforgiving of mistakes all night. There were no stage decorations or a fancy light show. The music was all that mattered. This is how Rock and Roll is supposed to be. (photo: Emerson Malone)

<http://www.dailyemerald.com/2015/04/12/the-replacements-return-to-portland-oh-no>

This show also saw the premier of "Whole Foods Blues" about the haughty customer service at the upscale grocery store.

The Replacements fan-blog **Nightclub Jitters** has some photos and video links, and a funny story:

The crowd could not get enough, even after the first encore. I threw a bunch of old used 45s, including Les Paul, Paul Anka, The Partridge Family (among others, they were supposed to be a gift!) onto the stage, just before Tommy followed the rest of the band offstage. He looked at me, then walked up to the records and just started breaking them and crushing them with his hands. All I could do was laugh.

<http://nightclubjitters.com/2015/04/12/playin-at-the-talent-show>

DaveB:

The crowd in Portland was much livelier than Seattle (and earned a second encore). Paul was having some technical difficulties with his monitor and breaking a string on a guitar (the Portland curse?), but he held it together (though he didn't always seem pleased). Someone kept throwing Voo Doo Doughnuts on stage at Tommy late in the show, and he picked one up and took a bite out of it. Someone else threw some records (45's) on stage at the end of the regular set (presumably for the band to sign), and Tommy broke them all to bits. At one point during the set Paul asked if the crowd wanted to hear Merry Go Round. When the audience was slow to respond he said something to the effect of "Ok, I can take the hint." People kept requesting covers (Black Diamond, Daydream Believer) and Paul said if the crowd kept that up the band would play nothing but blues. Green Acres Theme was played when more people were yelling out requests.

Set list:

Takin' a Ride - Favorite Thing - Hangin' Downtown - Whole Foods Blues (song debut) - Hangin' Downtown (reprise) - I Don't Know - Buck Hill - I Don't Know - I'm in Trouble - Kissing in Action (with part of Iron Man by Black Sabbath) - Little Mascara - Green Acres Theme (Vic Mizzy cover with Dave Minehan singing Eva Gabor's parts) - Talent Show - Portland - Nowhere Is My Home - I Will Dare - 20th Century Boy & Bang a Gong (Get It

On) (both T-Rex covers, sung by Dave Minehan) - All Shook Down - Anywhere's Better Than Here - White & Lazy - I'll Be You - Sixteen Blue - The Ledge - Achin' to Be - Within Your Reach - Can't Hardly Wait - Bastards of Young - My Boy Lollipop (Barbie Gaye cover, partial)

Encore 1: Skyway (Paul solo on acoustic guitar) - If Only You Were Lonely (full band, Paul on acoustic) - Left of the Dial - Alex Chilton

Encore 2: I.O.U. (then Paul tells audience "Oh, go home!" as he walks off stage)

Recording:

No full recording of the show has appeared yet, but there are several videos on YouTube at http://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL8PafDL_DurRcAllLg8a26KbOxf31IOpq

13 APRIL 2015 – San Francisco, CA (Masonic Auditorium) w/ John Doe

Rick Ramacier:

The SF show was tremendous. The boys were on that night. The bit with the tent and Paul having to take a "nap" was perfect. The Masonic holds about 3,000 people. About 2,000 of them were white guys between 40 and 55! It was surreal to be part of 3,000 people sing "Bastards of Young" word for word. The younger hipster types were either bemused or even a bit surprised that 50 year old guys could transform themselves back to their youth so completely and so compelling to the 'Mats. I got a great spot right next to the left of stage and was able to trade knowing looks with Tommy for a number of moments. It was a magical thing.

The only other show I saw during this reunion run was the one and only Midway Show last summer. That...was a top ten day of life experience. (photo: Rick Ramacier)



Nathaniel Williams:

Best non-song moments - Westerberg talked about going to Chinatown: "We have a Chinatown back home, it's called Target." He planted a sloppy kiss on Tommy midway thru "Kiss Me On The Bus." They all dove into the tent instead of going backstage at encore.

Emma Silvers of KQED Arts:

First off: There's really no such a thing as a casual Replacements fan. People either don't get what the big deal is or worship the Minneapolis rock forefathers, with that particular brand of emotional reverence reserved for music that has some kind of rarity, precariousness to it. In the case of the 'Mats, this is at least partially born of their breakup in 1991 — the swingin' party that ended much too soon, with terrific, booze-soaked theatrics, leaving behind a question mark about what could have been had its attendees not seemed hell-bent on mutually assured destruction. At the Masonic last night, some 3,300 fans — nary a casual one amongst them — got the chance to answer that question for themselves.

<http://ww2.kqed.org/arts/2015/04/14/live-review-the-replacements-still-beautifully-ramshackle-at-the-masonic>

Chris Willman from Billboard:

So bless Westerberg for getting Stinson back in the fold and allowing us a few nights to pretend that rock & roll full of bluster and spit and wit and wisdom and crankily veiled

melody really did inherit the earth. Wednesday's ecstatic experience of a gig was almost worth the quarter-century wait to see these should-be Hall of Famers back in action... even if its 70-minute length was considerably shorter than the other shows the Replacements have done so far on this tour. It could be that Westerberg wanted to conserve a little energy for Thursday night's sold-out follow-up concert at the Palladium. Or maybe he just needed to get his tax return in before midnight?

<http://www.billboard.com/articles/review/6538558/replacements-hollywood-palladium-concert-review>

Set list:

Takin' a Ride - Favorite Thing - Treatment Bound - Hangin' Downtown - I Don't Know (with parts of Elvis Presley "Little Sister" and "Buck Hill") - I.O.U. - Kissing in Action
Kissing in Action (with part of Iron Man by Black Sabbath) - I'm in Trouble - "Poetry Tent" (Paul reads in a tent to "Take Five," Brubeck) - Androgynous - I Will Dare - Kiss Me on the Bus - Nobody - If Only You Were Lonely - 20th Century Boy & Bang a Gong (Get It On) (both T. Rex covers, sung by Dave Minehan) - All Shook Down - Anywhere's Better Than Here - I Hate Music (partial) - I'll Be You - Take Me Down to the Hospital - Color Me Impressed - Sixteen Blue - The Ledge - Within Your Reach - Maybellene (Chuck Berry cover) - Can't Hardly Wait - Bastards of Young - My Boy Lollipop (Barbie Gaye cover) - Seen Your Video

Encore 1: Skyway (Paul solo acoustic)

Encore 2: Left of the Dial - Alex Chilton

Recording: <http://replacementslivearchive.blogspot.com/2015/04/april-13-2015-masonic-auditorium.html>

Here's a great example of the hilarious between-song banter from this show:

Tommy Stinson: "Satellite . . . has too many fuckin' notes! But I can play this one!"

(plays bass line to "I Hate Music", Paul sings first two lines, ends abruptly, goes into "I'll Be You")

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8JqCg0r-T-4>

15 APRIL 2015 – Los Angeles/Hollywood, CA (Hollywood Palladium) w/ John Doe

There are loads of great photos from this show from **Michelle Shiers** at *buzzbands.la*:
<http://buzzbands.la/2015/04/19/the-replacements-palladium>



There are more great photos from **David Benjamin** at *L.A. Record* at:

<http://larecord.com/photos/2015/04/16/the-replacements-the-john-doe-band-hollywood-palladium>

And no less than 57 shots from **Timothy Norris** at *LA Weekly*:

<http://www.laweekly.com/slideshow/the-replacements-at-the-hollywood-palladium-5503795>



Set list:

Seen Your Video - Takin' a Ride - Favorite Thing - I'm in Trouble - Kissing in Action (with part of Iron Man by Black Sabbath) - Kiss Me on the Bus - Nobody - Androgynous - I Will Dare - I'll Be You - 20th Century Boy & Bang a Gong (Get It On) (both T. Rex covers, sung by Dave Minehan) - All Shook Down - Anywhere's Better Than Here - Waitress in the Sky - Valentine - White and Lazy - Whole Foods Blues - Can't Hardly Wait - Bastards of Young - My Boy Lollipop (Barbie Gaye cover) - I Don't Know - Buck Hill - Within Your Reach

Encore 1: Left of the Dial - Alex Chilton

Encore 2: Never Mind

Recording: <http://replacementslivearchive.blogspot.com/2015/04/april-14-2015-hollywood-palladium-los.html>

...and somebody showed up with a trombone for "Can't Hardly Wait".

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4dXHrkcr8>

16 APRIL 2015 – Los Angeles/Hollywood, CA (Hollywood Palladium) w/ Together Pangea

Chris Morgutia:

I can't describe how amazing tonight was. I've been waiting for this moment since I first heard them back in high school, and even more when they reunited. Definitely nothing like the performances of yesteryear that established their reputation as a live band, but The 'Mats brought the passion, fire, and energy tonight. My neck is killing me, my voice is completely shot. I'm going to hate dragging my ass out of bed and all the way to school tomorrow morning, but this was definitely worth it.



photos: Chris Morgutia

There is a review and more great photos of the show by **Philip Cosores** of *Consequence of Sound*:

The concert's best moments were the expected ones. "Valentine" saw the band gel into a loose and beaming unit, creating a state of euphoria in the audience. Even Stinson noticed, chiming in that they had "finally gotten that one right after a year of practice." And while Westerberg still needed a few smokes to get through the set, he didn't lie about the maturing aspect of the band, speaking about how they used to drink all day and now spent the afternoon at the gym. Even the new jam they performed was a goof about shopping at Whole Foods Market.

<http://consequenceofsound.net/2015/04/live-review-the-replacements-at-the-hollywood-palladium-416>

An Instagram from drummer **Josh Freese** shows Paul **Westerberg** launching his **Gibson SG** through the air (photo by **Martin Wong**):



joshfreese · 4 months ago

+ Follow



Amazing shot from the end of last nights Replacements show. I'm looking on kinda freaked out that Paul sent his fav SG sailing through the air without warning to his guitar tech who looks like it he don't catch it he'll be catching a Greyhound home.

There's a video of the acrobatics here: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AHN9OgKS6Rs>

Set list:

I'm in Trouble - Kissing in Action (excerpt from Iron Man by Black Sabbath) - Little Mascara - Color Me Impressed - Love You Till Friday - Maybellene (Chuck Berry cover) - Treatment Bound - Take Me Down to the Hospital - Waitress in the Sky - Valentine - Achin' to Be - Kiss Me on the Bus - Nobody - I Will Dare - Tommy Gets His Tonsils Out (with part of 3rd Stone from the Sun by Jimi Hendrix) - Sixteen Blue - The Ledge - I'll Be You - Whole Food Blues - Can't Hardly Wait - Bastards of Young - My Boy Lollipop (Barbie Gaye cover) - Never Mind

Encore 1: Ghost On The Canvas (Paul solo on acoustic guitar) - Skyway

Encore 2: Left of the Dial - Alex Chilton

Encore 3: I Want You Back (Jackson 5 cover) - I.O.U.

Recording: <http://replacementslivearchive.blogspot.com/2015/04/hollywood-palladium-los-angeles-ca-jb.html>

Possibly the best recording of Whole Foods Blues: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UDyGdTbkH2Y>



photo: Jay Russell

19 APRIL 2015 – Denver, CO (The Fillmore) w/Teenage Bottlerocket

Bigbak at *paulwesterberg.com*:

Sunday night's Replacements' show at the Fillmore was everything a 'Mats fan could ask for - at least this 'mats fan. The boys were tight, having fun belting out the hits (Minehan is just a beast the way he's ripping through solos, absolutely tore up the Ledge).

The opener was a Blink-182ish band from Wyoming that called themselves Teenage Bottlerocket, a well-rehearsed, enthusiastic neo-punk outfit, but somewhat of a one-tempo band that still found it necessary to shout "Make some fucking noise!" at various intervals. They proclaimed themselves honored to be opening for the Replacements, and played original songs as well as a few choice covers - Van Halen's "Panama", The Ramones' "Blitzkrieg Bop", and even a sampling of Cheap Trick.

The 'Mats took the stage to Iron Butterfly's "In-A-Gadda-Da-Vida", a song with a bit of personal meaning to me - it was my intro song for wrestling matches (in my glorious misspent youth).

Three years into the reunion, and the practice is paying off. The energy hasn't dropped off a bit - I actually think it has increased. The boys were in much better form for this show than they were at Boston Calling last year, and the crowd knew it. Everybody was rocking out like we had all collectively reverted to our early twenties again, no easy trick for a lot of us, that.

Somewhere between three and four thousand people came out for the show. The crowd seemed to be largely my age or better, though I did see a number of kids, you know, those under-thirties who can still pull off skinny jeans.

The set list was a loosely followed guide - the band played a number of tunes not shown on the list, as well as a countrified version of "Waitress In The Sky", a sample of the drum intro for the Knack's "My Sharona", the T-Rex medley consisting of "20th Century Boy" and "Bang A Gong" (with Dave Minehan taking the vocals for 20th Century), and the shambling cover of the old doo-wop tune "My Boy Lollipop".

Paul asked the band if there were any requests, and after listening to the crowd shouting out songs (I heard everything from "Jumping Jack Flash" to the obligatory "Freebird" - oh wait, that was me) the band did a few seconds of a discordant mash-up that sounded like "bleagh", but with instruments.

The new blues song ("Whole Foods" on the set list, to the tune of The Thrill Is Gone) was played, and a few added treats followed - "All Shook Down", "Anywhere Is Better Than Here", "Can't Hardly Wait" with a surprise guest on the trombone for the first break (I

have no idea who it was).

Paul came out solo for the first two encore numbers – “Skyway” and “If Only You Were Lonely”. Tommy, Josh, & Dave then joined him for “Left Of The Dial” followed by the best live version of “Alex Chilton” I’ve ever heard - an incredible blast of raw power and tangible emotional energy.

With the exception of the first reunion show at Riot Fest in 2013, this was the best Replacements show I’ve ever experienced, and a lot of what gives the Riot Fest show the edge over this one is sentiment, as it was the first 'mats show I'd seen in 25 years.

John Moore at Hey Reverb:

Although Westerberg, who was having guitar issues late in the night, did simply walk off during “Never Mind,” leaving the band to finish the main set without him. . . . For the many hundreds surely experiencing The Replacements live for the first time, Sunday’s show was a vivid and visceral explanation of the band’s enduring reputation as one of rock’s all-time greats. And hardcore fans surely left grateful that their favorite band gave them one more chance to commune together. I know I ran into pretty much everyone I ever knew in my youth.

<http://www.heyreverb.com/blog/2015/04/20/the-replacements-at-the-fillmore-auditorium-in-denver-photos-review/102912>

Eric Schultz has a ton of great pictures from this show:

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/ejschultz/sets/72157653787368718>



Set list:

I'm in Trouble - Kissing in Action - Little Mascara - Color Me Impressed - Talent Show - Portland - Nowhere Is My Home - Take Me Down to the Hospital - Waitress in the Sky - Valentine - Kiss Me on the Bus - Nobody - Androgynous (abandoned during intro) - Treatment Bound - I Will Dare - Tommy Gets His Tonsils Out - Sixteen Blue - The Ledge - 20th Century Boy & Bang a Gong (both T. Rex covers, sung by Dave Minehan) - All Shook Down - Anywhere's Better Than Here - Wake Up - I'll Be You - Can't Hardly Wait - Bastards of Young - Whole Foods Blues - Seen Your Video - Never Mind (Paul leaves the stage, Tommy completes the final chorus)

Encore: Skyway (Paul only, acoustic) - If Only You Were Lonely (Paul only, acoustic) - Left of the Dial - Alex Chilton

Recording: <http://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLQQVPu4ZVYJXDWGN82mnMMZnXN662G3em>

Addendum:

If there's one thing here you read, make sure it's the Odysseyan curses-and-wanderings-and-fights-filled journal of Mikey Holland (who plays drums in Boston bands Mean Creek and The Dazies), where he sees the Replacements at this show and then took his "first EVER vacation that wasn't a tour" driving to see both Replacements shows in Chicago (because being on tour himself doesn't count: "that shit is no vacation").

<http://www.vanyaland.com/2015/05/06/tattoos-booze-and-no-way-to-lose-mikey-holland-spends-a-week-chasing-the-replacements>

27 APRIL 2015 – Cambridge, MA (Converse Rubber Tracks Live) w/Dinosaur Jr. & The Young Leaves

You had to get seriously lucky to catch this show – only 500 free tickets were randomly given out through a lottery. When the band came out, Paul Westerberg announced, “You’ll get your money’s worth – I guaran-fucking-tee it!”

They wore Lone Ranger masks for the first song and were in exalted spirits:



Photo: Tim Bugbee (*digboston*)

<http://digboston.com/fotobom-the-replacements-dinosaur-jr-at-the-sinclair-427>

Jed Gottlieb of The Boston Herald:

Slayer has more fans. Passion Pit has the attention of the industry. But of all the free Converse Rubber Tracks Live shows at the Sinclair this week, the 'Mats had the buzz.

http://www.bostonherald.com/entertainment/music/guestlisted/2015/04/last_best_show_the_replacements_and_dinosaur_jr_at_the

Maura Johnston of The Boston Globe quoted singer Christopher Chaisson of Young Leaves:

“Obviously we’re excited to see the Replacements and Dinosaur Jr. — we’ve been ripping them off for the past 30 minutes.”

<http://www.bostonglobe.com/arts/music/2015/04/28/replacements-kick-off-rubber-tracks-series-sinclair/a1NvMrzASdBXZ4aHNq6WAO/story.html>



photo: Ben Stas (*Boston Globe*)

Brad Searles of *Bradley's Almanac*:

Anyone concerned that a corporate-sponsored free show would shut out quote-unquote 'real' fans, resulting in a room full of need-to-be-seensters, well, no worries. The crowd was enthusiastic, smiling, and singing along up where I was. That said, we lost points when, after "Left of the Dial", someone yelled "Tommy!" at Paul. His response? "You don't even know my fuckin' name!"

<http://www.bradleysalmanac.com/?p=2690>

Brad Searles also posted photos at <http://www.flickr.com/photos/bsearles/sets/72157651875412938>

They only let in 500 people, but I think each one of them had an SLR! Everybody who was there apparently has photos from this show. There are photos from right up against the stage from

Josh Pickering:

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/do617/tags/RubberTracksLiveNightOne427>

Vanyaland has some crowd shots and action shots of all the bands that night:

<http://www.vanyaland.com/2015/04/28/photo-gallery-the-replacements-dinosaur-jr-the-young-leaves-for-converse-rubber-tracks-live-the-sinclair>

And there are some excellent black and white photos from **Johnny Anguish**:

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/johnnyanguish/sets/72157652241422701>

More great shots from **BCDWire**:

<http://www.bdcwire.com/gallery/show-scenes-the-replacements-at-the-sinclair>

Tom Hardy at *Allston Pudding* has lots of close ups:

<http://allstonpudding.com/review-converse-rubber-tracks-night-1-the-replacements-dinosaur-jr-the-young-leaves>

“Unsatisfied” ended with Westerberg smashing his 12 string acoustic guitar. Listen to the recording for a loose and fun show with lots of laughing.

Set list:

Seen Your Video - Takin' a Ride - Treatment Bound - Kissing in Action - I'm in Trouble - Left of the Dial - Kiss Me on the Bus - Nobody - I Will Dare - Valentine - Waitress in the Sky - 20th Century Boy & Bang a Gong (Get It On) (both T. Rex covers, sung by Dave Minehan) - All Shook Down - Anywhere's Better Than Here - Whole Foods Blues - Skinny Black Jeans - Sixteen Blue - Another Girl, Another Planet (The Only Ones cover) - Can't Hardly Wait - The Ledge - Within Your Reach - Bastards of Young - Never Mind - Unsatisfied - Alex Chilton

Recording: <http://replacementslivearchive.blogspot.com/2015/05/april-27-2015-sinclair-converse-rubber.html>

Addendum:

The aforementioned **Mikey Holland** apparently **ran into Paul Westerberg in Boston** the day after the show **buying a pair of shoes** at Berk's.

Little known fact about Paul Westerberg . . . he apparently has a very hard time buying shoes because he has extremely wide feet.

<http://www.bostonglobe.com/lifestyle/names/2015/04/30/boston-bands-playing-replacements-tribute-show-for-fans-who-couldn-get-into-sinclair-show/yVpoYjcG5T2NqMMPmmQEul/story.html>

29 APRIL 2015 – Chicago, IL (Riviera Theater) w/The Smoking Popes

You can't see the *Chicago Tribune's* review titled "Replacements still a mess, but a mischief-filled one" on-line for free anymore, but **paulwesterberg.com** has an excerpt:

Make no mistake, by most standards the show was a bit of a mess, full of missed cues, flubbed lines and plenty of fooling around. Westerberg conspicuously avoided nearly all of his most heartfelt ballads, and he and the band gleefully sabotaged some of their most popular tracks, kicking "I Will Dare" into double time or tacking on a taste of the bubblegum ditty "My Boy Lollipop" to the end of an otherwise blazing "Bastards of Young." The airtight "Left of the Dial" and heavy "The Ledge" were balanced by loose renditions of lighter fare like "Waitress in the Sky" and "Kiss Me on the Bus," all to the band's mischievous delight. A new song, "Whole Foods Blues," was as much a goof as a truncated T. Rex medley.

Yet if Westerberg and Stinson didn't want to be doing this, they clearly wouldn't. Anchored by unflappable session drummer Josh Freese and enabled by guitarist Dave Minehan, the pair were having a blast, every indulgence and detour tempered by the fact that they were still singing and playing their hearts out.

Chris Riemenschneider of the *Minneapolis Star Tribune* (with some photos by **Tony Nelson**) caught the show and felt some surly-ness from the band on their first night in Chicago:

Chances are pretty good that hometown fans won't see a better show than the one the band gave them last September at Midway Stadium in St. Paul. That performance was unusually tight and regimented yet unmistakably spirited and fun (so fun!), the culmination of a dozen (*sic*) previous gigs where the new Replacements finally made a case for the lovably erratic band as a full-bore, kick-ass/take-names rock 'n' roll unit.

Chicago is also a big part of Replacements lore, particularly as the site of the band's last gig before its 1991 split. In no way did Westerberg and Stinson seem ready Wednesday to wind things down again, but they also didn't mean business the way they did last fall.

They goofed around more. . . . A few bars of Black Sabbath's "Iron Man" were plopped into the second song, "Kissing in Action." Near show's end, the raging outro of "Bastards of Young" instead turned into Barbie Gaye's late-'50s bubble-gum hit "My Boy Lollipop." Throughout, lyrics were sometimes mangled for fun or dropped for effect, in addition to the occasional forgotten line that is standard Westerberg practice (or lack thereof).

The goofiest moment was their new jam "Whole Food Blues" — "song" really oversells it — which found Westerberg soloing on his guitar like one of the last of the original Chicago bluesmen.

"It took balls to do that here" in Chicago, he cracked afterward.

They also experimented more with the set list and song arrangements. The second half of "I Will Dare" was jacked up to at about twice the normal speed, and they added a rollicking country flavor to "Treatment Bound."

The concert itself was also inexplicably cut short. After opening the encore with his young-drunk-and-in-love acoustic anthem "If Only You Were Lonely," Westerberg made some kind of huffy comment to an audience member and abruptly walked off. He did return, but only for one final song, "Alex Chilton," with a couple others that were nixed off the printed set list.

<http://www.startribune.com/replacements-roll-on-in-rocky-chicago-theater-show/301977011>

James Richard IV has lots of gorgeous shots from the show in this article from *Brooklyn Vegan*:



http://www.brooklynvegan.com/archives/2015/04/replacements_on.html

Set list:

I'm in Trouble - Kissing in Action (with Iron Man by Black Sabbath) - Little Mascara - Color Me Impressed - Treatment Bound - Take Me Down to the Hospital - Waitress in the Sky - Valentine - Achin' to Be - Kiss Me on the Bus - Rattlesnake (abbreviated) - Nobody - Whole Foods Blues - I Will Dare - Sixteen Blue - The Ledge - I'll Be You - Can't Hardly Wait - Bastards of Young - My Boy Lollipop (Barbie Gaye cover) - 20th Century Boy & Bang a Gong (both T. Rex covers, sung by Dave Minehan) - All Shook Down - Anywhere's Better Than Here - Left of the Dial

Encore 1: If Only You Were Lonely

Encore 2: Alex Chilton

Recording: http://www.youtube.com/watch?list=PLiN6XHY0n_u6XWzX8ko1Ud7S9IgdDdSlgk&v=QJw1lx3msbM

30 APRIL 2015 – Chicago, IL (Riviera Theater) w/The Smoking Popes

After the first song, Paul Westerberg announced, “Already like you better than last night's crowd. They were stinky.” He also said, “You'll go to your grave before you hear 'Answering Machine'.”

Josh Terry at *RedEye* described some of the rascal-ness Paul exhibited that night:

"It won't take a lot to beat last night's crowd. They were sleepy. Don't bore us!" said the Replacements' bassist Tommy Stinson just before launching into opener "Takin' A Ride."

Recently reunited, the Replacements still have that cheerfully reckless attitude that has made the Minnesota band so lovable since its beginning. Middle fingers almost always raised and tongues unfailingly planted in cheeks—the 'Mats have been one of the most simultaneously volatile and transcendent rock acts since its initial run. Drunken antics, forgotten lyrics and onstage meltdowns make the group's live shows unpredictable. Yet the group's gigs, anchored on the strength of frontman Paul Westerberg's impeccable songwriting, are often awe-inspiring and cathartic experiences.

Some hitches aren't the least bit surprising. After all, the band has a precarious relationship to Chicago. In 1991, the Replacements called it quits at a disastrous Taste of Chicago appearance. They didn't officially perform together again until August 2013 at Riot Fest Toronto. It's only natural that the Thursday night show wasn't exactly smooth. True to form, Westerberg called out band members for messing up while forgetting lyrics himself.

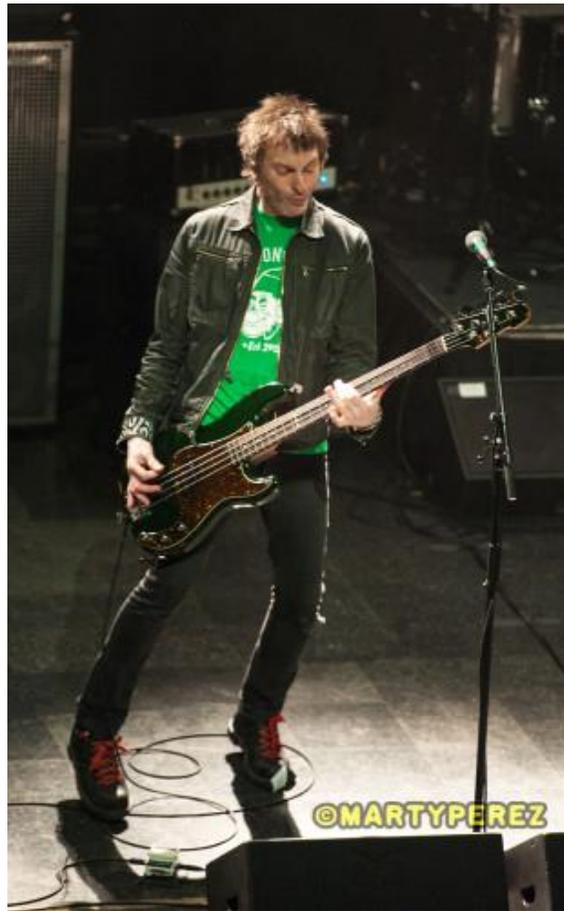
Often it seemed the possibly grumpy but still on-point group would cut the performance short. ("Good night, everyone," joked Stinson after five songs.) During the set closing song "Alex Chilton," Westerberg sang from the comfort of a tent. "Paul needs a timeout," explained Stinson. Despite the tensions, the band still exhilaratingly blazed through its 25-song setlist.

Thankfully the setlist was drastically different than the night before's. With so many diehard fans attending both shows, the Replacements, while goofing off onstage didn't mess around with the crowd's expectations or patience. It was a rowdy, career-spanning, fun night, celebrating a still vibrant legacy act. While the 'Mats were wonderfully unhinged, the band put on a hell of a performance—not to mention the group's stellar opener, local punk legends Smoking Popes.

The probably three or four audience members under 25 years old, myself included, witnessed rock legends effortlessly manage to maintain relevancy.

<http://www.redeyechicago.com/music/redeye-the-replacements-concert-review-riviera-430-chicago-20150430-htmistory.html>

Marty Perez of *blurtonline* has great photos of the members of the band from this show:



<http://blurtonline.com/review/replacements-smoking-popes-43015-chicago>

Curt Bowman:

Great couple of days in Chicago with the one I love, good eats, a variety of beers, friends old/new and The Replacements. I came into this with the feeling I was enjoying them for the last two times and nothing I saw or heard changed that. The two days resembled the passing of a long estranged loved one I had just recently been reunited with in September with Wednesday being the wake and Thursday being the funeral. I know it sounds bleak, but bear with me.

Wednesday was the meeting of people that knew them over the last 30+ years too and a gathering to share memories. Introductions of strangers from near and far whose lives have revolved around this common denominator but totally separate. The show itself was masterful with the most fantastic version of a song I ever witnessed: The Ledge. The evening contained just the right amount of laughter and seriousness. A celebration of everything that gave them life as the greatest American rock n' roll band. Thursday brought familiarity with the people you connected with the day before. Most memories had been shared and everything centered around the events of the night before. People

moving a little slower, gearing up for a second emotional day. The show was more ramshackle. From their appearance right through their performance. Tommy seemingly spending as much time off stage right as on it.. Paul spending as much time not singing lyrics as singing the wrong ones. To fit my funeral analogy, Paul even "buries" himself out of sight in a tent at the most climatic moment, Alex Chilton. Less celebration of life and more a reminder of the things that killed them as the greatest American rock n' roll band. This may all seem long winded and a little too serious, but driving home late last night with my wife asleep next to me and 1372 Overton Park keeping me company, these are the thoughts I had. I felt like I saw everything their life as a band has been in 2 hours and 50 minutes over two nights. Wonderful and messed up like mine and I'm sure some of yours. I hope I'm wrong about it being the end, but if the last memory I will have of this loved one is that blistering rendition of I.O.U. and them walking off stage, I'll take it. It beats pickin' cotton and never to be forgotten.

Set list:

Takin' a Ride - Hangin' Downtown - Color Me Impressed - Seen Your Video - Kissing in Action - Left of the Dial - Little Mascara - Androgynous - Kiss Me on the Bus - Nobody - I Will Dare - Waitress in the Sky - Valentine - Tommy Gets His Tonsils Out - Whole Foods Blues - Can't Hardly Wait - Bastards of Young - My Boy Lollipop (Barbie Gaye cover) - Customer - Within Your Reach - Never Mind - Merry Go Round - 20th Century Boy (T. Rex cover, presumably sung by Dave Minehan)) - Take Me Down to the Hospital - Alex Chilton

Encore: I.O.U.

Recording: http://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=replacements+chicago+30+april

2 MAY 2015 – Milwaukee, WI (Eagle's Ballroom) w/Midnight Reruns

The band's co-manager, Ben Pearlstein, was happy to see the band playing his hometown.

"I've been working in music for over 20 years, and this is the pinnacle for me," said the 37-year-old New York resident, who started out booking shows and playing in Milwaukee bands the Benjamins and Mad Planet. "And to bring this tour to Milwaukee is amazing. I don't think I've been more excited for a show."

<http://www.jsonline.com/entertainment/musicandnightlife/milwaukee-manager-ben-pearlstein-has-front-row-seat-to-replacements-reunion-b99490693z1-302044611.html>



Photos: Adam Levin

Kevin Mueller of *Milwaukee Magazine*:

It was an auspicious sign that The Replacements took the stage to "What's Made Milwaukee Famous (Has Made a Loser Out of Me)." The appropriate and personal selection foreshadowed what would be a wild and momentous evening. The band kicked it in high gear from its early beginnings with a blistering rendition of the opening track from its debut album, "Takin' a Ride," and didn't let go of the wheel, going straight into "Favorite Thing," "Color Me Impressed" and "Seen Your Video" from there. The frantic pace felt dizzying. The first thing from Stinson's mouth during a break was a gleeful, "hehehe."

The usual complaints regarding poor, muddled sound interminably lobbed at the cavernous Eagles Ballroom were unfounded here. The Replacements sounded incredible when they wanted to sound incredible and sounded messy and uncoordinated when they wanted to sound messy and uncoordinated. Near the middle of the set, things began to unravel, but that felt like the point. While the drunken shenanigans are firmly in the bands' past, that same unpredictable energy remains.

Westerberg lit a cigarette to sing the loose ballad “Androgynous” and after drinking from a paper cup, explained, “It’s tea.”

Interspersing the set with a handful of disorderly covers (in typical fashion), including Chuck Berry’s “Maybellene,” The Jackson Five’s “I Want You Back” and Barbie Gaye’s “My Boy Lollipop,” The Replacements tightened up again and closed the initial set with three massive sing-along anthems “Can’t Hardly Wait,” “Bastards of Young,” and “Never Mind.” It was an overwhelming and cathartic moment. The band returned twice for delightful encores, but after 27 songs over an hour and a half, there was little left to give. In the end, it was an absolute joy to simply be a passenger on the Replacements’ supremely fun, wild ride.

<http://www.milwaukeeemag.com/2015/05/04/review-the-replacements-at-the-rave>

John Schulze of *examiner.com*:

Last night, May 2, The Replacements brought their Back By Unpopular Demand Tour to Milwaukee at The Rave and performed before a sold out crowd in the ballroom. There's a certain amount of irony to the title of this tour as most dates have sold out rather quickly, and in the case of Milwaukee, a reported 3,500 tickets were snatched up within 7 minutes. . . . The Replacements last night were everything the fans expected, which meant that their sound retained the raw, gritty and gutsy notions that made them the prototype that inevitably influenced so many bands that came after them. Those notions also made the concert prone to be a bit unpredictable, which made for one hell of an off-the-cuff show. Often and favorably the band strayed from the set list that served merely as a guiding light to work from, and they were rewarded for doing so with an audience that sung along, sometimes louder than the band. (photo: John Schulze)

<http://www.examiner.com/article/the-replacements-bring-back-by-unpopular-demand-tour-to-milwaukee-at-the-rave>



Evan Rytlewski from *Shepard Express*:

“A couple of times late in the show Westerberg paused to admire the crowd and the atmosphere, and he seemed genuine. But whether the band was truly enjoying themselves, pretending to enjoy themselves or pretending not to enjoy themselves was beside the point—whatever the case, they delivered everything fans could have hoped for from a Replacements reunion show. For their second and final encore, they closed with the Pleased To Meet Me ripper ‘I.O.U.’, which seemed a fitting sign-off for a concert where the band met all their obligations, if not a sly commentary on the reunion itself. “I want it in writing,” Westerberg wailed, ‘I owe you nothing.’”

<http://expressmilwaukee.com/article-permalink-25644.html>

Piet Levy from the *Journal Sentinel*:

Then there's the diversity — from arena anthem for outcasts "Bastards of Young" to country tune "Waitress." Few other bands could pull off all these styles, and at the same time create a style of its own making, quite like the Replacements.

Another upside to dependability: The band actually made it through two encores, and Westerberg seemed giddy to make it through "Little Mascara" ("Twenty-five years, and that's the first time that came out right," he quipped.) And when he came out to perform "Skyway" alone on electric guitar, the effect was surprisingly beautiful.

<http://www.jsonline.com/entertainment/musicandnightlife/the-replacements-less-reckless-more-reliable-at-sold-out-raves-eagles-ballroom-show-b99488769z1-302335061.html>

Check out this **setlist!**

Takin' a Ride - Favorite Thing - Color Me Impressed - Seen Your Video - Kissing in Action (with Iron Man by Black Sabbath) - I'm in Trouble - Little Mascara - Waitress in the Sky - Valentine - Nobody - Kiss Me on the Bus - Androgynous - I Want You Back (Jackson 5 cover) - I Will Dare - Tommy Gets His Tonsils Out (with Third Stone from the Sun by Jimi Hendrix) - I'll Be You - Maybellene (Chuck Berry cover) - Can't Hardly Wait - Bastards of Young - My Boy Lollipop (Barbie Gaye cover) - Within Your Reach - Never Mind

Encore 1: Left of the Dial - Alex Chilton

Encore 2: Skyway - I.O.U.

Recording: http://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=replacements+milwaukee+2015

3 MAY 2015 – Detroit, MI (The Fillmore) w/The Silks

(Westerberg produced and played on the Silks' album *Last American Band* in 2013.)

Paul started to lose his voice, so Dave Minehan picked up the vocals where he could.

There are some excellent close-up photos from **Marc Nader**:

<http://www.schwegweb.com/shows/photos-the-replacements-05-03-15-back-by-unpopular-demand-tour-the-fillmore-detroit-mi>



Set list:

Takin' a Ride - Favorite Thing - Color Me Impressed - Treatment Bound - Another Girl, Another Planet (The Only Ones cover) - Waitress in the Sky - Valentine - Tommy Gets His Tonsils Out - Sixteen Blue - I Don't Know (with part of Buck Hill) - Maybellene (Chuck Berry cover) - Kiss Me on the Bus - Androgynous - I Will Dare - 20th Century Boy & Bang a Gong (Get It On) (both T. Rex covers, presumably sung by Dave Minehan) - All Shook Down - Merry Go Round - Can't Hardly Wait - Bastards of Young - My Boy Lollipop (Barbie Gaye cover) - Be My Lover (Alice Cooper cover) - Left of the Dial - Alex Chilton

Recording: <http://replacementslivearchive.blogspot.com/2015/05/may-3-2015-fillmore-detroit-mi-metaclam.html>

Plus videos: http://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=replacements+detroit+2015

5 MAY 2015 – Pittsburgh, PA (Stage AE) w/The Gotobeds

6 MAY 2015 – Columbus, OH (LC Pavilion) w/Two Car Garage

First, there was the message:

The good news is that Paul is getting better, but the bad news is that he's still too under the weather to pull off tomorrow's show in Columbus. So, it's with heavy consideration and regret that we need to postpone that show as well. He's resting up for the DC and Philly shows this weekend and everybody's looking forward to getting back out there. Sitting around in hotel rooms is boring.

Pittsburgh and Columbus – we are truly sorry and are working overtime to figure out how and when we can come back and make this all up to you. Hold on to your tickets in the meantime, and you'll be able to use them then.

If you can make it to Philadelphia this Saturday, there are still some tickets left for our show at Festival Pier.

Regretfully Yours,
The Replacements

Unfortunately, it was followed by:

The Replacements regret to inform our friends in Pittsburgh and Columbus that the shows that were originally scheduled for May 5 & 6 will have to be canceled. We've explored every possibility to reschedule these shows within the window of opportunity but prior commitments and conflicts have prevented us from doing so.

All tickets purchased for these shows will be refunded at the point of purchase. We sincerely apologize for any inconvenience this has caused and hope that we can come back in the future and make it up to you.

8 MAY 2015 – Washington D.C. (Echostage) w/J. Roddy Walston and The Business

"I gotta tune this thing up. I'll do it after a few songs." - Paul Westerberg

"And I'd knock you back with something sweet and wrong." – altered lyrics to Valentine

The *Washington City Paper* has this and many more photos from **Erica Bruce**.



<http://www.washingtoncitypaper.com/slideshows/photos/423/photos-the-replacements-echostage-dc-2015/1>

Some of Erica Bruce's photos also appear in the story written **Mike Snider** in *USA Today*, the country's largest newspaper:

Westerberg did introduce the song *Nobody* from the band's final album, 1990s *All Shook Down*, as "a little song about unrequited marital discord."

And after *I'll Be You*, Stinson said, "That's the best we played that the whole trip."

<http://www.usatoday.com/story/life/2015/05/11/the-replacements-washington-dc-concert-review/27060345>

Erica happens to be a huge Replacements fan – if you can't tell from the name of her blog – and a great concert photographer. You can see her other rock show reviews and photos at

<http://betweenloveandlove.blogspot.com>.

The encore also saw the premier of a new song, tentatively titled "Watering Can Song", which unfortunately didn't show up again on the tour. (Luckily somebody recorded the show – see the link below to hear it.)

Set list:

Takin' a Ride - Favorite Thing - Take Me Down to the Hospital - Kissing in Action - I'm in Trouble - Little Mascara - Waitress in the Sky - Valentine - Treatment Bound - Nobody - Kiss Me on the Bus - Seen Your Video - I Will Dare - White and Lazy - Color Me Impressed - I'll Be You - Whole Foods Blues - Merry Go Round - Within Your Reach - Can't Hardly Wait - Bastards of Young - My Boy Lollipop (Barbie Gaye cover)

Encore: "Watering Can Song" (new song?) - Skyway - Left of the Dial - Alex Chilton - Never Mind - I.O.U.

Recording: <http://youtu.be/CuBIM1P5alw>

(The sole performance of the new "Watering Can Song" starts at 1:17:35.)

There are several **videos** at http://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=replacements+echo+stage

9 MAY 2015 – Philadelphia, PA (Festival Pier) w/Superchunk & J. Roddy Walston and The Business

Opening for the Replacements' final US show on this tour were Superchunk from North Carolina, who are big Replacements fans, particularly their drummer Jon Wurster. **Matt Hickey** of famed Philly-based indie rock magazine *Magnet* interviewed them on how stoked they were opening for the 'Mats. (Jon Wurster is also a professional comedian and the drummer for Bob Mould and has played with Rocket From The Crypt and Guided by Voices, amongst many other rockin' rock'n'roll rock bands. He is also repeatedly referenced in the Dead Milkmen song "Stuart".)

How important are the Replacements to you?

[*Superchunk drummer Jon*] Wurster: Everybody has that one band they most identify with and claim as their own. For me, the Replacements were that band. (OK, Hüsker Dü was my *other* band.) I remember sitting in Dead Milkmen guitarist Joe Jack Talcum's bedroom in early 1984 and hearing "Color Me Impressed" for the first time and really being affected by it. To my ears, it was one of the first great blends of punk snarl and pop melody by a band from my generation. From then on, I was a fan. I bought their records as soon as they came out and went on road trips to see them live. The Replacements were the musical embodiment of the all the crazy, mixed-up feelings you experience in your late teens and twenties. They were the perfect mix of bravado, fear, anger, humor and mental illness—I can say that because I'm a crazy person, too. Did I want to be in the Replacements? Let's just say I ran to a Dallas-Fort Worth Airport pay phone the moment I heard Chris Mars was out of the band and called their managers to plead my case. Sadly, I was too late.

<http://www.magnetmagazine.com/2015/03/03/cant-hardly-wait-superchunk-on-opening-for-the-replacements>

Chris Sikich of the *Philadelphia City Paper* has loads of photos and writes like you were there:

The speakers began to blare the catchy bombast of The Trashmen's "Surfin' Bird" and out came the Minnesotan indie rock legends in the flesh. For the next 90 minutes and 25 or so songs, The Replacements owned Penn's Landing.

Opening with "Takin' a Ride," the first track on their debut album *Sorry Ma, Forgot to Take Out the Trash*, The Replacements did not waste any time. Tight and electrifying, Paul Westerberg and Tommy Stinson led the rock brigade. Reveling in the space the Festival Pier stage gave them, Westerberg and Stinson flexed their rock poses while unleashing classics like "Can't Hardly Wait" and "Bastards of Young." The crowd responded in kind, singing along in the unseasonably warm Saturday-night air. Guitarist Dave Minehan and drummer Josh Freese, playing with a drumhead adorned with an image from the television show *Love Boat*, may be the new faces in the band, but they filled out the crunches and jangles quite seamlessly.

Westerberg and company did get a bit loose and creative. Responding to a request, they played part of “Election Day” for the first time on the tour. And the most fascinating oddity of the night was their attempt to play the songs “Androgynous” and “Seen Your Video” at the exact same time. Certainly not a perfect moment, but it was an ingenious bit of punk spontaneity.

Two encores were played, but one could not ask for more than the first ending with “Alex Chilton” and the show concluding with “Unsatisfied.” The final notes of that song still ring in my ear days later. Westerberg sauntered off and Stinson declared his love for Philly and said he may move here someday. What is certain is that The Replacements are adding to a music legacy that still has a lot of gas in the tank and a lot of fans ready for more garage rock road trips.

(photo: Chris Sikich)



<http://citypaper.net/blogs/concert-review/photos-the-replacements-festival-pier-5/9>

Sad Songs Keep the Devil Away at *No Depression* wrote a sincere fan review:

It in no way disappointed and is hovering in my mental “best list” for the past 30+ hours. A sophomore me heard *Let It Be* at an Atlanta, Georgia house party circa ‘95-’96, right around the Olympic-size summer blast heard ‘round the world.

Your favorite band was influenced by Paul Westerberg, Tommy and Bobby Stinson, Chris Mars, and of course you can’t leave out Slim Dunlap’s impetuous contributions. And the first two are still doing it better than your favorite band.

The set list pure mastery with a remarkable version of “Hold My Life” that I still haven’t managed to come down from; “Takin a Ride” opener, half of “Election Day” into “Little Mascara”, “Androgynous” and “Seen Your Video” played simultaneously. The only thing missing for me was “We’re Comin’ Out”, I always saw myself losing my mind to that while visualizing this show for the past 6 months. A trifecta double encore of “Left of the Dial”, “Alex Chilton”, and penultimate closer “Unsatisfied” made up for that in spades. I’ll stop there to prevent the proverbial “salt in the wound” cliché. It was magic though. Kudos to Josh Freese and Dave Minehan on drums and guitar, respectfully, for filling in perfectly the spaces once held by Mars, Bobby Stinson, Steve Foley, and Dunlap who’s recovering from the effects of a stroke -- Godspeed, Slim. Such a tight show and the sound was impeccable - who would of thought that circa 1989? “Back By Unpopular Demand”, hopefully longer than sooner.

<http://nodepression.com/live-review/replacements-dont-stink>

Dan DeLuca of *the Philadelphia Inquirer* saw the Replacements at least six times since 1985 and claimed this show was

...energized, bang-up, tighter-than-they've-ever-been . . . all those songs that were never added to alt-rock radio sounded remarkably fresh. Raucous rock and roll about yearning for authentic experience never goes out of style, and it helps when an expert band finally takes its music as seriously as it deserves. Welcome back, 'Mats. Long may you rock.

http://articles.philly.com/2015-05-12/entertainment/62044759_1_paul-westerberg-replacements-tommy-stinson

Jim at *Cool Dad Music* gave another rapturous review:

A couple of spontaneous moments had me smiling. At one point, a fan requested "Hold My Life" from the front row. Westerberg pointed them out and noted that they'd been requesting the song for several shows straight. "We don't know it, but we'll try it." Then, turning to Tommy, "...the one with the seven-and-a-half bar change." The version that came out was about as flawless as you'd ever expect from the band. Later, Westerberg gave the crowd a choice between "Seen Your Video" and "Androgynous."

"Both?? At the same time?? Sure. Why not?"

Stinson and Freese played "Seen Your Video," while Westerberg and Minehan played "Androgynous." Weird, discordant, and funny. At the end of it, they launched into a proper version of "Seen Your Video"

When The Replacements were done, CoolMom and I looked at each other and said, "That's it??" The Replacements played 25 songs over the course of a set that spanned their entire career and that lasted over 100 minutes. We still wanted more out of them.

I guess that's our problem. It's our problem for loving a band so much that we would have sat there for hours listening to them. They did exactly what a band is supposed to do for a crowd. The Replacements lifted us up. They gave us part of themselves and delivered a fantastic show. They left us wanting more. Can't wait for the next time.

<http://www.cooldadmusic.com/2015/05/the-replacements-played-festival-pier.html>

Chris M. Junior's article in *Goldmine* has two great photos from the show:

http://www.goldminemag.com/reviews/the-replacements-take-a-satisfying-ride-through-their-back-catalog_concert-review_philadelphia_5-9-2015

There are many close ups at **Rockshots Live's** Facebook page:



<http://www.facebook.com/media/set/?set=a.919669221387632.1073741930.195099967177898>

Set list:

Takin' a Ride - Favorite Thing - I Don't Know - Buck Hill - I Don't Know - Tommy Gets His Tonsils Out (with Third Stone From the Sun by Jimi Hendrix) - Kissing in Action - I'm in Trouble - Election Day (only first half of the song) - Little Mascara - Hold My Life - Valentine - Nobody - Kiss Me on the Bus - Androgynous & Seen Your Video (both played at the same time) - Seen Your Video - I Will Dare - Wake Up - Borstal Breakout (Sham 69 cover) - Within Your Reach - Can't Hardly Wait - Bastards of Young - My Boy Lollipop (Barbie Gaye cover) - Never Mind

Encore 1: Left of the Dial - Alex Chilton

Encore 2: Unsatisfied

Recording: <http://replacementslivearchive.blogspot.com/2015/05/festival-pier-penns-landing.html>

28 MAY 2015 – Barcelona, Spain (Primavera Festival) w/nobody that mattered when the Replacements were playing

The first time I saw Replacements was in June 1991 at Peony Park in Omaha, Nebraska. I waited all summer long to hear when they would come again but I heard the day after the fourth of July that they had broken up from Robb Nansel, future czar at Saddle Creek Records. Like any shocking moment, I remember it clearly, all while standing next to his sister who was wearing a shirt from the concert. I wondered, why does your favorite band decide to do something else other than drive around the country and play their incredible songs? What else could be better than that? The show I had seen had been a full-on show with no signs of weariness or any hint of a loss of purpose. The absence of any future Replacements shows - and wanting to hear what it was like to see them in 1984 or 1989 - is what led me to start the Skyway a year later to hear stories and meet other Replacements fans.

In May 2015 in Barcelona at the Primavera Festival, I wandered from seeing Viet Cong and Giant Sand to where the Replacements were going to play in an hour. Paul's familiar Solda"no" guitar amp head I remembered from the 1991 show and solo tours, along with a wall of enough Hiwatt and Ampeg SVT's to rock an arena, were on a stage in front of a nearly empty field. There were only a handful of people sitting in front of the barricades that served only to give the bored bouncers pacing room in the red haze of the setting Mediterranean early summer sun.

With ten minutes before they were to play, I turned around to see the field behind me suddenly filled with people noticeably murmuring in a multitude of languages in anticipation.

I started to look at the time, counting down the minutes. In the rush of ending the school year as a teacher, and preparing for the trip to Barcelona and some job interviews, I hadn't had time to stop and dwell on the significance of the fact that I waited over half my life to see this event until now.

Without exaggeration, this performance was probably the thing that I waited for the longest in my life so far. All the other things you wonder and wait for in life - love, another Star Wars movie, playing in a touring rock band, living on another continent, or EU citizenship - always took less than 24 years to happen. Whatever concert I went to in the last two decades - whether it was seeing Paul solo ten times or Superchunk for the twentieth - was arguably a replacement for the one show that I wished I was seeing instead.

And it finally happened : "Surfin' Bird" came blaring on the PA and the band ran for their instruments to fit their set in their proscribed festival time slot. They came on spitting fire - and in the words of Paul Broadhead, who also had seen the hometown show at Midway Stadium, this show was "an hour long fucking riot". All the songs were the power numbers, the full-on rock set. Not even "Unsatisfied" or "Swinging Party". The few songs in the set that normally reflections of introspective indecision – "I Will Dare", "Bastards of Young", "Never Mind" - were played and

shouted by the crowd like triumphant anthems. They had played all these songs before on this tour, but I couldn't feel any less explosive with joy at each recognizable opening chord. And they blew through the songs like it was the show of their lives and like it was the last show on earth. I don't know if it was because they were racing against the time limit in their festival slot, or, after seeing Bob Stinson disappear and what happened to Slim and 1991 fill-in drummer Steve Foley, they were playing with the constant reminder of how temporary it all is. They played like they either had something to prove or it was a big finale. As you can see from the stances in the photos I got while crushed up against the barricade. (photos: Matt Tomich)



Afterwards, message boards on Spanish Facebook lit up with superlatives, people saying it exceeded expectations, it was one of the best performances they had seen, and regrets from those who missed it or those who wished friends could have been there.

Here's a **glowing review** from a local newspaper, *El Punt Avui* (my poor translated from Catalan):

Do not forget The Replacements when, from now on, you make a list of historical performances at Primavera Sound. There are many tours that have passed by and returned to the festival in its fifteen-year history, but only a few have the naturalness of the group exuded by Paul Westerberg and Tommy Stinson, who came on the stage at ten minutes past nine and, for an hour, flew by, making clear their role in history. They came out eager to take on the world ... 'and the world ate' (they succeeded). Linking song after each other as if they were the Ramones, eternally young and without poses, they left the crowd knocked out, at least the Catalans who had waited decades for a concert in Barcelona. They played through the roof with adrenaline, Valentine, Waitress in the Sky, I Will Dare, Kiss Me on the Bus, Can't Hardly Wait, Bastards of Young, Left of the Dial, Alex Chilton and Never Mind, and among other hymns, their own fleeting version of Jackson 5, Chuck Berry and Joy Division. And when, in the end, coinciding with the introductory riff of I.O.U, Westerberg snapped and dealt a karate blow to the microphone stand, everyone was aware of the relevance of the performance. A superb mark to the end of a '10' concert.

<http://www.elpuntavui.cat/noticia/article/5-cultura/19-cultura/861101-replacements-a-mil.html?cca=1>

I'd argue this is a better show and set list than any other time you could have seen the band from 1980 to 1991. You could have seen a more chaotic version of the Replacements, a rowdier one, a louder one, one with the late great Bob Stinson or the celebrated artist Chris Mars - or one more hopeful for the future, that the album they just released or the tour they were on might finally be the breakthrough they deserved. But if you are in love with the *songs* and hope the band gets the gratitude they deserve, then this is it: this is Replacements heaven. And in Spain, the band probably expected nothing and looked visibly shocked and amazed and buoyant at the jubilant reaction they got an ocean away from home. They played with focus and enthusiasm like they knew that these moments in any life are finite in number. If there was ever a success that the band had ever chased, I don't know what more they could ever hope for more than this.

It felt like a celebration of all the pent up hopes I and the others around me had to ever hear these songs. It was an explosive signal, a flare in the fading twilight of the rock era. It was something people still and will talk about years from now. It was worth the weight and the wait.

Set List:

Takin a Ride - I'm in Trouble - Favorite Thing - Tommy Gets His Tonsils Out - Valentine - Waitress in the Sky - Kiss Me on the Bus - Achin' to Be - I Will Dare - I Want You Back (Jackson 5 cover) - Color Me Impressed - Maybellene (Chuck Berry cover) - Can't Hardly

Wait - Bastards of Young - My Boy Lollipop (Barbie Gaye cover) - Love Will Tear Us Apart (partial, Joy Division cover) - Left of the Dial - Alex Chilton

Encore: Never Mind - I.O.U.

Recording:

The entire show isn't up, but you can tell from these videos that the ferocity and confidence the band is playing with in these songs is even more than the other shows on this tour.

http://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=replacements+barcelona

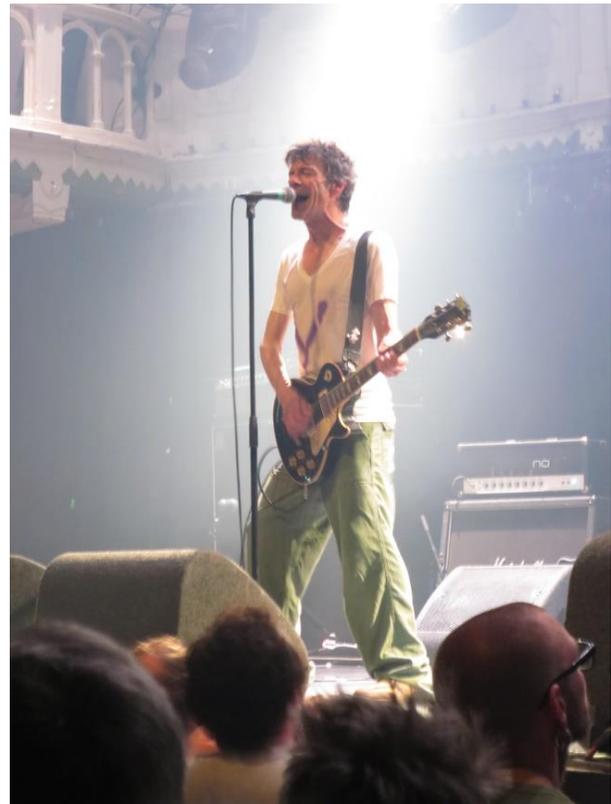
If you need something to listen to at a volume that allows you to share your excellent music taste with your neighbors, here's the epic pre-encore finale of "Bastards of Young", "Left of the Dial", "Alex Chilton" and all the covers in-between: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WLyARHjjmo&hd=1>

30 MAY 2015 – Amsterdam, The Netherlands (Paradiso) w/Jesse Malin

I was lucky enough to have a ticket to see them again two days later in Amsterdam. After the blow out in Barcelona, what was left for them to do?

It was another great show. Instead of a huge field at a festival, it was an intimate theater and was almost identical in the feeling of seeing the Replacements in a ballroom in 1991. It didn't feel like a reunion. They never played for a moment like they were there for the cash or it was a job. It felt like The Replacements had never broken up, and were just playing a night on tour where they were absolutely 'on'. If you compare this to the last time they played the Netherlands in 1991 (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wiMvLf2gpUk>), you can see they hadn't lost any of energy or spark at all – in fact, they were playing better than ever (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-KYXHViQU>).

(photo: Matt Tomich)



Peter Bruyn of the local magazine *Lust for Life* reviewed the show:

Paradiso was last night sold out at The Replacements, and that is very UN-Replacements. The previous three visits to the Amsterdam room – in 1986, 1987 and 1991 – pulled together not even enough people to fill the puppet theatre, once to the rafters. And the group played awful well, what also very on-Replacements.

<http://flmagazine.nl/concertrecensies/the-replacements-in-paradiso>

I watched the show in disbelief I was seeing the band I had waited decades to see, twice in one week. Once again, the energy was unflagging for the entire show, the place was sold out, and judging from all the recordings I've heard, Paul's voice sounded its best since the reunion started.

Not only was the show itself something that would have been the highlight of any band's career, but the Paradiso is a converted gorgeous nineteenth century church that was turned into a concert hall, which gave the entire show an ethereal air, as you can see from this photo (which was taken while trying to see the show around Dutch people, who are famous for being the tallest on the planet). (photo: Matt Tomich)



For guitar fanatics, I kept notes of what guitars they used during particular songs.

Set list:

(all came on stage to Surfin' Bird)

[Paul: red SG special with P90's/Dave: black Les Paul]

Takin' A Ride - I'm In Trouble - Favorite Thing - Careless (about 20 seconds worth) -
Tommy Gets His Tonsils Out/Third Stone From the Sun

[Paul: wood grain Telecaster Deluxe w/F hole/Dave: black Les Paul]

Valentine - (Paul points out his sister in the balcony) Waitress in the Sky

[Paul: harmonica/Dave: black Les Paul]

White and Lazy

[Paul: orange Axl-Ben Air /Dave: white Telecaster]

Kiss Me On The Bus - Achin' To Be - Nobody - (Seen Your Video)/Androgynous (at first
simultaneously, then all played Androgynous) - I Will Dare

[Paul: orange Axl-Ben Air /Dave: black Les Paul]

Color Me Impressed

*[Paul: sunburst Les Paul Junior, probably the same one in the Merry Go Round video/Dave:
black Les Paul]*

Merry Go Round - Anywhere Is Better Than Here

[Paul: Gibson ES335 hollowbody/Dave: black Les Paul]

I'll Be You – Maybelline (Chuck Berry cover) - I Don't Know w/Buck Hill - Within Your Reach - Can't Hardly Wait - Bastards of Young – My Boy Lollipop (Barbie Gaye cover)

[Paul: Dan Armstrong lucite guitar/Dave: black Les Paul]

Left of the Dial - Alex Chilton

[Paul: Gretsch 12 string/Dave: black Les Paul]

Encore: Skyway (Paul solo) - Unsatisfied

[Paul: Les Paul/Dave: black Les Paul]

Never Mind (Paul to Tommy: "This is a song I wrote about your brother!") - I.O.U.

Recording: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nya22M9Eyio&list=PLKJV0v0bVdT8Eij9wi786YwMUIbmfWFMf>

After the Amsterdam show, I got to meet with the band's manager, Darren Hill. Again, if you never saw the first Westerberg solo tour, Darren was the bass player, along with the replacement Replacements guitarist Dave Minehan and drummer Josh Freese. Darren was as affable as he was when I first talked to him in the lobby of the Ranch Bowl in Omaha, Nebraska in July 1993 before Westerberg's very first post-Replacements solo show.

Darren showed a cell phone photo he took of the near-empty field in Barcelona just moments before the Replacements, laughing as he related he was wondering if it was going to be his last moment as their manager. He said he missed playing (as Darren has been in touring bands since the Red Rockers in 1979), but loves what he does now. He said that the Replacements reunion has been like a fairy-tale, with the unbelievably huge response and the outpouring of love and memories for the band has been beyond his wildest dreams.

I talked to Dave Minehan for a while, who is as electrically animated when talking about anything as he is when playing guitar. He said it was the shows with the Replacements were all that he could have hoped for. He had been happily running his recording studio, Woolly Mammoth (<http://www.woollymammothsound.net>), outside Boston and thought he had "hung up his spurs" of the days playing on stage and living in a tour bus "when the call came out of the blue." He agreed that the reunion's was a huge sign that guitar rock was not ready to surrender to obscurity. He also noticed amps sounded better on Europe's 230v power compared with 110v in the U.S.

I ran into Paul for a minute. I asked him that if sold out shows across the U.S. and packed shows a continent away with people from all over Europe cheering and singing along wasn't success, what was? He said, "Just you wait!"

And what exactly he was referring to, if anything, is something we'll still have to wait to see.

2 JUNE 2015 – London, England (The Roundhouse) w/You Am I & Jesse Malin

Paul and Tommy had almost more interviews with press in the UK than they did in the US.

From an interview with **Michael Hann** of *The Guardian*:

“There was a game that had to be played that had nothing to do with music and everything to do with stroking someone else and fucking doing the whole song and dance that was completely foreign and, quite frankly, illegal to us,” Stinson says of their attitude to career management. “It was reprehensible some of the things they wanted us to do that were supposed to make our career bigger and ultimately make them the money. I swear to God we tried several times to get in line with that and we just couldn’t do it. Our personalities would not allow us to do that thing.”

“I admit there’s a lack of dignity,” says the Replacements’ singer, songwriter and rhythm guitarist, Paul Westerberg. “But that’s part of what being the band is. You have to go out on a limb and take a chance. Falling on your face when you’re young and good looking is one thing, but when you’re an old man it can be quite humiliating.”

The two founder members – they are now supplemented on stage by drummer Josh Freese and guitarist Dave Minehan – have markedly different attitudes to their band now. For Stinson, it’s a journey back with “attitude and nonchalance”, the chance to remind everyone that “the charm of the Replacements is that we’re not the greatest musicians on the planet, we’re a great fucking rock’n’roll band.”

For Westerberg, there’s the irritated awareness that after two years on the road, the Replacements have again become an opportunity for other people to make money. “There’s certainly whiffs of that these days,” he says. “There’s income being generated, and, like the song says, money changes everything. But once we get up there ... We play for free. We get paid for waiting.” There’s also the problem of relearning the songs all over again, 25 or 30 years after they were written. “Literally, we haven’t played Treatment Bound in years, so I’m sitting there writing the words for the second time in my life. The first time was when we did it and the second time is here, 30 years later,” he says.

And there’s the fact that being a Replacement again has revived something in him. “Since starting up with the band again it’s kind of shaken every cobweb out of my head and got me rattled in a way – probably in a good way. I can’t relax any more. I can’t sit down and watch the television. I’m torn between the world of being a father, a homeowner and a creative artist and a rock’n’roll singer. I was doing the crossword puzzle waiting for you to call, and that’s about as relaxing as I get.”

<http://www.theguardian.com/music/2015/may/21/the-replacements-thirty-years-later-interview>

The appearance of the Australian band You Am I in the Northern Hemisphere just to play these two shows was just as much of a highlight for some fans. Graham Stroud said on the first night, they were “were very sloppy and drunk . . . but apparently got off the plane from Sydney that morning.” He also said that “the atmosphere was electric” with anticipation waiting for the Replacements.

This issue is full of reviews from newspapers, but the best are from fans. **Jay** from *Stringerville* knows what’s up:

“I’ve been asked many times over the years to try to explain why I love The Replacements so much, and why it is they command such devotion from a relatively small amount of fans. I’ve tried and failed. But last night, watching them live for the very first time, I heard a few thousand people singing Androgynous at the tops of their lungs, the words belted out like a stadium anthem. . . .

I’ve had a relationship with this band and this music for longer than I care to recall. One way or another, my obsession with them has informed my adult life, and their sensibilities have bled through into my own writing. The way they went about their business deals and career ambitions has, for better or worse, often guided my own decision making. But -even though I’ve seen both Paul Westerberg and Tommy Stinson play solo tours- the relationship has always been in something of the abstract. The band split up in 1991, and I was never going to get to see them.

The last two decades have been kind to the legend of The Replacements, if not to the band members themselves. Even if they weren’t legitimately great, history may well have chosen them to fill the same spot; being the band that fizzled and died just before punk and alt rock exploded into mainstream success, the band that had influenced Nirvana and Green Day, as well as hipster darlings like Wilco and Ryan Adams. A band who could be talked about in newsnet groups, and then the early message boards, at a time when the internet existed just enough to share the story of a band, but not yet enough to instantly share the music. There are maybe a handful of bands who existed at that precise perfect nexus point, between influencing many disparate artists who were more successful, to the internet’s early ability to fan flames, and to the new generation of music writers who wanted to be able to talk of a band who were great, but who you would never see, unlike those writers, who were there and saw it. If you were of a cynical mind, you could say the ‘Mats didn’t need to have been any good to earn the legend they did.

You’d be completely wrong.

You could also argue that I was going to enjoy the gig no matter what. I was already prepared to do that. Heading into the venue, I knew deep down that I wasn’t expecting greatness. I was going to see my favourite band, and they would play maybe an hour’s worth of songs that I love. They would do a decent job of faking the commitment and spirit, and we in the crowd would do a decent job of making up any shortfall in energy,

and I would come away having had a great time, but really knowing that most of the enjoyment had been from the idea of seeing the band, and not the experience.

I was completely wrong.

I'm one of a generation of fans who have helped to build that legend. We've written about this band in such fanciful, overblown and pretentious terms, that a reader could almost forget we were writing about a rock and roll band, and assume we were talking about some great art house project. I'm as guilty of that as most. I've written more about The Replacements than any other topic, and usually in the most wankerly and hifalutin terms. And you know what? I stand by every word. And, no doubt, in future I will do it all over again.

But last night stopped the band from being a legend in my head, and turned them into an actual, working, playing act on a stage in front of me. In doing so, it made me realise the one thing I'd missed all these years. For all of the high praise I can throw at the material, for the arguments I can make about Westerberg being our finest lyricist, about the various messages the band sent out simply by existing, we can lose sight of one thing; The highest praise, the only praise, this band needs is to say what a stunning rock and roll band they are.

A drummer, two guitarists, a bass player. Loud vocals. Energy, chords, rhythm.

The Replacements took to the stage last night and ripped through 29 songs. They played longer, louder, faster and better than I expected. There were no gimmicks, no frills, no pyro. Nobody needed to walk onto the stage on an elephant, or riding a giant lemon, and there was no need for a video screen behind them to help add a feeling of scale or importance.

Last night, they were the best rock and roll band you could hope to see. There's no higher praise.

<http://www.stringerville.com/2015/06/03/the-replacements-live-at-the-roundhouse-02-06-2015>

The band was in hilarious spirits according to *Every Record Tells a Story*:

Westerberg pauses to take "requests". "I'm gonna keep listening until someone calls out what's written here" he jokes, pointing to the set list.

"I have are a request for "Black Diamond" he then remarks, referring to the Kiss cover that appears on "Let It Be". You know what that means? That means we play the blues", he says before the band launches into a punk inflected, but also creditably blues inflected cover of Elmore James' "Dust My Broom", Westerberg brandishing a mean slide guitar. Punks playing blues? You saw it here first...

<http://everyrecordtellsastory.com/2015/06/03/the-replacements-live-at-the-roundhouse-review>

Rhian Daly wrote in the June 13, 2015 issue of *NME* that the show was a 9 out of 10 and wasn't "just a case of going through the motions" but "an out-of-this-world, and long overdue, return."

James McMahon of *Kerrang!* gave the show a 5/5: "Whether it's the quasi-hit Alex Chilton or encore highlight Unsatisfied, The Replacements play every song like world-beating heroes."

In June 2015, **Peter Perrett** of The Only Ones defended criticism on an internet message board of the Replacements' looseness in their cover of "Another Girl, Another Planet" at this show:

For what it's worth, I feel that Paul Westerberg is a kindred spirit, a man of passion. I like the "trashiness" of this performance. It invokes the spirit of '77, when the song was first performed with health & energy ! peter

Set list:

Takin' a Ride - I'm In Trouble - Favorite Thing - Tommy Gets His Tonsils Out - Valentine
- Waitress in the Sky - Lost Highway (Leon Payne cover) - Kiss Me on the Bus - Talent
Show - Portland - Talent Show - Achin' to Be - Androgynous - I Will Dare - Color Me
Impressed - Dust My Broom (Elmore James cover) - Merry Go Round - Wake Up -
Treatment Bound - I'll Be You - Maybellene (Chuck Berry cover) - Can't Hardly Wait -
Bastards of Young - My Boy Lollipop (Barbie Gaye cover) - Left of the Dial - Alex Chilton

Encore: If Only You Were Lonely - Unsatisfied - Never Mind - I.O.U. - Another Girl,
Another Planet (The Only Ones cover)

Recording: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bWaOQleq_5M&hd=1

Paul dedicated "I'll Be You" to Slim Dunlap.

3 JUNE 2015 – London, England (The Roundhouse) w/You Am I & Jesse Malin

Tickets for the first London show sold out so quickly that a second was added almost immediately.

Newspapers had already published reviews for the show the night before, so there isn't much written about this night from newspapers or magazines. This was one of only two shows on the tour that wasn't sold out, but almost everyone I know who went to the first night's sold out show went to this one as well.

Graham Stroud:

The Tommy single was recorded at the Roundhouse with Davey from You Am I during this day [before the show].

I was near the front until they played Hospital when the place went nuts and I'm too old to be jumped all over.

I know Porto followed, but the show had a real 'end of tour' vibe about it.

Paul Broadhead, who saw multiple shows on both continents since the Replacements reunited, says which one is his favorite:

There are six of us and we all sat in a bar in Camden with the midnight hour closing in. We're having one of those discussions, the type we've all had at some point. We're trying to work out the best show we've ever seen. Only tonight, the discussion is a little different. For each and every one of us are in complete agreement; that the Replacements show at the Roundhouse tonight was the best show that any of us have ever been at.

Most of us were at the Roundhouse show last night. It was as good as it gets. Some of us were at the Barcelona Primavera show less than a week ago. I'm the only one who'd been fortunate enough to fly to Minnesota last year to see the hometown show in St Paul. After every one of these concerts, I'd come to the conclusion that it was the greatest show of my life. Hell, the greatest night of my life. You do that, when caught up in the moment. I've lost track of the times my friends have said to me, "Ooh, ooh, best night of your life..." mocking me for getting carried away with my emotions. But they're the ones who don't 'get' The Replacements. All of us sat in this bar tonight are in complete agreement. Tonight's was the very best.

What made it greater than the rest? The setlist was more or less the same as last night. An ever heartfelt "Little Mascara". A massive sing-a-long to "Androgynous" that made the damp hairs stand up on the back of sweat (and beer) soaked necks- an apt theme tune for the 'cool' kids of Camden Lock. An anthemic "I'll Be You". The blood curdling call to (throw down your) arms of "Bastards Of Young". A hilarious "My Bob Lollipop". The hip-shaking,

love-making sexed up moves of “Alex Chilton”. A raucous, shambolic, drunken “If Only You Were Lonely”. Added bonuses tonight, were an aching beautiful “Sixteen Blue”, a hauntingly bittersweet “Within Your Reach”, an always poignant “Skyway”, whilst “Nobody” seemed a little too close to home for Paul and had everybody who’s in the know wanting to offer him a shoulder and a stiff drink. So maybe the set list had a little to do with it. But they were just as fucked up and beautiful as last night, and indeed, the countless bootleg videos and tapes and CD’s and vinyl that I’ve heard, collected and cherished over the years. They were just as funny, just as rude, just as don’t-give-a-fuck whilst at the same time willing to bleed, cry and give their every last drop for their adoring public.

So what was it? Maybe it’s that ungraspable idea. The thing we can’t ever quite put our fingers on. The thing that even the great poets struggle over for a lifetime. Why our favorite song is better than the millions of songs we’ve heard previously. Why it’s different when we fall in love. Or maybe, just maybe, we were that little bit drunker. And maybe that’s where the answer lies. With The Replacements, there’s never really been much logic, or philosophy, or sense. I could wax lyrical to somebody for hours on end why The Replacements are my favourite band, but would it matter? At the end of the day, they are my favourite band because they are The Replacements. They are The Replacements because they are my favourite band. And tonight, six people from different cities, different walks of life, different ages, are all in complete agreement. That tonight, we saw the best show of our lives.

Set list:

Takin' a Ride - Favorite Thing - Tommy Gets His Tonsils Out - Little Mascara - I'm In Trouble - Waitress in the Sky - Valentine - Kiss Me on the Bus - Nobody - Androgynous - Take Me Down to the Hospital - I Will Dare - Color Me Impressed - I Want You Back (Jackson 5 cover) - I'll Be You - Hangin' Downtown - Sixteen Blue - I Don't Know (with Buck Hill) - Within Your Reach - Can't Hardly Wait - Bastards of Young - My Boy Lollipop (Barbie Gaye cover) - Be My Lover (Alice Cooper cover)

Encore: Skyway - If Only You Were Lonely - Seen Your Video - Left of the Dial - Alex Chilton

Recording: http://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=replacments+roundhouse+3

4 JUNE 2015 – Porto, Portugal (NOS Primavera Sound festival)

This was announced on-stage by Paul Westerberg as the final Replacements show. Whether it was meant as a joke or for real or just temporarily, who knows? Probably about 5 people.

The facts:

- The band didn't bother to soundcheck for the show.
- Paul and Tommy switched instruments in the middle of "I'll Be You".
(http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Lh1_o8106kM)

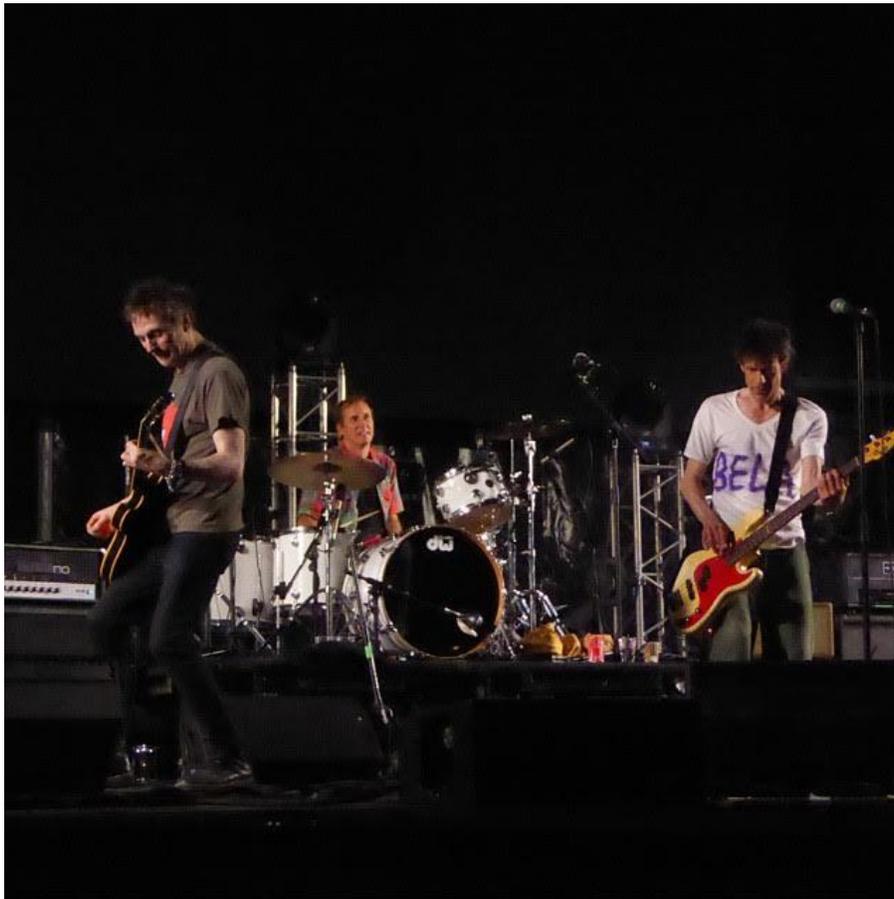


Photo: Marcel Vargas

Sophia Spiteri:

They were incredible! They're such performers and great musicians. They were constantly taking the piss [making jokes]. Paul smashed his guitar when his roadie couldn't catch it when he was changing gear. They kept making jokes that it was their last ever performance, but no one in the crowd thought they were serious.

Daniel Dylan Ray of *the Quietus*:

Terrible clothes, smashing guitars and T-Rex – I witnessed the death of the Replacements (again)

Grizzly bar room rockers the Replacements were always associated with rambunctious, sloppy, drunken performances in their heyday. The mad surge of youth, carelessness and alcohol propelling their Big Star meets Springsteen meets the Ramones blend of alt-rock. So seeing how this would stand up some thirty years later as they move towards 60 would prove interesting. Paul Westerberg runs onto the stage to a surprisingly empty crowd (the lowest I see for a main stage act by some stretch) and the group – dressed in what is truly a horrendous collection of clothes between them – begin to tear through 'Takin' A Ride' with a pace that borders on the unfathomable. This continues for the first few songs as it becomes unclear whether they are attempting to channel the breakneck speed of their early work or simply aiming get through the set as fast as is humanly possible. They hammer through their catalogue in a mixture of thrilling bursts and forgettable standards. At one point Westerberg throws a guitar to his tech who drops it, he picks it up and looks to try again but instead opts for smashing it neck first into the stage, smashing it with ease like it was a toothpick. They continue onwards with flashes of brilliance lighting up the more forgettable and workmanlike moments. They throw together a sloppy T-Rex cover, bash out a couple more songs, finish on 'Alex Chilton' and then, as announced by Westerberg cantankerously, break up on stage (again).

<http://thequietus.com/articles/18079-things-learned-at-nos-primavera-sound-live-review>

Set list:

Takin' a Ride - Favorite Thing - Tommy Gets His Tonsils Out - Take Me Down to the Hospital - Little Mascara - I'm in Trouble - Waitress in the Sky - Valentine - Kiss Me on the Bus - Nowhere Is My Home - Androgynous - I Will Dare - I'll Be You - The Ledge - Maybellene (Chuck Berry cover) - Customer – Never Mind - Can't Hardly Wait - Bastards of Young - My Boy Lollipop

Encore: 20th Century Boy (T-Rex cover, presumably sung by Dave Minehan) - If Only You Were Lonely - Left of the Dial - Alex Chilton

Recording: http://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=porto+the+replacements

NOW WHAT?

“During the band's performance at Primavera Porto today, The Replacements’ Paul Westerberg announced that this would be the last time that the band plays together. After saying that the band stayed at the hotel instead of coming in for sound check, he also reportedly said "lazy bastards to the end" and smashed his guitar.

During the Replacements’ reunion tour over the past two months, Paul Westerberg has worn a white t-shirt every night with a letter spray painted onto the front and back, spelling out two different sentences with each side. Fans have pieced together the sentences on the Facebook page Paul’s Shirt [<http://www.facebook.com/pwshirt>], according to which the message reads: “I have always loved you. Now I must whore my past.”
<http://pitchfork.com/news/59854-paul-westerberg-says-the-replacements-just-played-their-final-show>

The front of Paul’s shirt, from each night of the tour:

“I have always loved you.”



<http://www.paulwesterberg.com/pauls-shirt/>

(Back: **“Now I must whore my past.”**)

Just a month earlier, **Annie Zaleski** of *Salon* wrote:

Yet there's still the sense that this return is fleeting, as if the Replacements could disappear again at any moment. That fragility crossed with stubborn sturdiness is what always made the band's music so touching, and what makes it endure today. Their songs hit a nerve by digging into the dark corners of the psyche and acknowledging life's confusion, but choosing to deal with it by shrugging and staying off the beaten path, while just assuming that things would work out the way they were supposed to.

http://www.salon.com/2015/05/01/the_replacements_owe_us_nothing_%E2%80%94_but_the_timing_of_their_reunion_couldnt_be_better

An interview with **Piet Levy** from the *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel* (April 30, 2015) with Tommy Stinson echoes that there may be no real plan:

"We're having fun with this thing, and we've already gone on longer than we thought we would," he said, saying there were no concrete Replacements plans beyond the tour.

<http://www.jsonline.com/entertainment/musicandnightlife/tommy-stinson-on-reunited-replacements-were-roughly-the-same-dudes-b99490698z1-302043261.html>

From the May 2015 article on The Replacements in *Uncut*:

For his part, [drummer] Josh Freese is equally keen that The Replacements continue to preserve their cherished legendary status. "I think if they were to come around to your town again and you were thinking, 'Ah, well, we'll see 'em the next time,' if they were just another band on the circuit, like all the rest, then that wouldn't be good. They should keep some mystique. They should keep that legend."

Billboard was writing articles with headlines like "The Replacements Back on Track: Recording New Music, Vinyl Box Sets, Documentary Planned" and confirming that the band was at a peak:

...every stop of their current Back by Unpopular Demand tour has sold out. Die-hard followers -- largely middle-aged fans whose teen years were made bearable by Westerberg's sensitive-but-searing growl and the band's punky abandon, tender balladry and bratty humor -- say this is the best the group has sounded in decades.

<http://www.billboard.com/biz/articles/news/legal-and-management/6545801/the-replacements-are-back-on-track-recording-new>

Of all those promises in the title of the *Billboard* article, only the Twin-Tone vinyl re-release of their first four albums has so far surfaced (although their manager **Darren Hill** is quoted in the *Billboard* article as saying that the aborted recordings led to "seven or eight songs that may or may not see the light of day. 'It's just a question of what the band wants to ultimately do with them,' he says, adding that Westerberg still has a backlog of songs 'you wouldn't believe,' and that Stinson also has 'tons of great songs.'")

Dave Minehan was interviewed by *Boston Groupie News* and gave his insight about what Paul said that night in Portugal:

Right, that last thing in Portugal, you know four weeks ago, was like "This is our last show". I think the thing is Paul says all kinds of stuff on stage. Every night it's just kind of a running banter. It's a funny, half-cocked shit. But that said, I always think like every show could be the last show of the Replacements. That's just the way it is. You know, there's just kind of a perishable thing about this. And I've learned not to butt in on any of that and I think that's why he appreciates me too.

It was ironic because before we went onstage that night, at the festival in Porto, Portugal, the grounds were just incredibly beautiful. Stages set in different parts of these rolling hills that you walk to, and it's just stunning. And I'm looking around, we finished sound check, and I gave him a hug, and said "You know Paul, if this was the end of it now, this is a good one." And then later that night like "This is our last show." *(everyone laughs)*.

<http://www.bostongroupienews.com/DavidMinehanInterview.html>

Kathy Shine of *paulwesterberg.com* wrote:

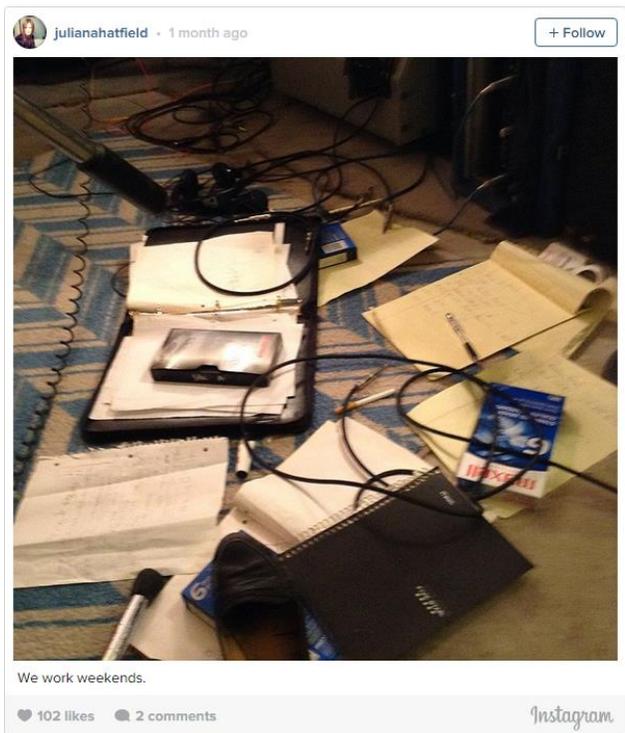
I know it's easy for those of us who have seen a show to say, but if this is all there is, then that's OK. It was a helluva victory lap and probably the most well-deserved and overdue victory lap in the history of band reunions. They actually did snatch victory from the jaws of defeat 22 years after the fact. Which is probably the most Mats-like thing they have ever done.

We are lucky we had any of the Riotfest shows, much less the string of festival appearances in 2014 with the magical shows in St. Paul and New York City. The 2015 tour of (mostly) indoor headlining shows was everything a fan could have hoped for – and even a European tour, much less one that saw the band sounding better than ever and was so fanatically received compared to their other tours. Kathy and others have referred to the reunion as a “victory lap”, but the reaction to the shows in Europe I saw came across as winning the gold medal they were due the first time around.

Then again, maybe The Replacements are the Andy Kaufmann of rock.

So what is next?

On July 12, 2015 Juliana Hatfield's Instagram showed two photos of her working on music with Paul Westerberg:



With another photo on August 10:



Tommy Stinson announced a string of solo shows for the second half of 2015, including playing Riotfest and his hometown at St. Paul's The Turf Club. An article by **Chris Riemenschneider** from the *Star Tribune* has the news of his new band and a link to his new single.

<http://www.facebook.com/tommystinson>

http://www.facebook.com/tommystinson/app_308540029359

<http://www.startribune.com/tommy-stinson-ready-to-roll-past-the-replacements-again/322200151>

Adam Mead already caught Tommy Stinson on tour at the Bowery Electric in NYC on July 23:

Enjoying the hell out of himself, in his usual mix of self-deprecating humor and charisma, Tommy and band tore through what seemed like an album's worth of new material. Mixed in were songs from One Man Mutiny ("Destroy Me", "Meant To Be", "Match Made in Hell") and Village Gorilla Head ("Motivation", "Not a Moment Too Soon"). New songs included "On the Rocks", "Not this Time", and lead single "Can't Be Bothered", with You Am I guitarist Davey Lane sitting in with the band. Luther Dickinson (Jim Dickinson's son) is the lead guitarist and was obviously enjoying his time in Tommy's company. Hugs were exchanged, broad smiles shared. The band was filled out by drummer Frank Ferrer, who shared time in Guns n' Roses with Tommy, Cat Popper on bass and Tony Kieraldo on keys. I have to say the new songs were wonderful and just flat out blew the doors off the place. I was told the new record will most likely come out in the new year, but one more single will be released as 7 inch in the coming months.



Dave Minehan announced that the Neighborhoods are back together.

<http://www.facebook.com/pages/The-Neighborhoods/89126895145>

And **Josh Freese** was already the busiest man in the business of keeping time, not to mention appearing on “Rad Dads”. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pGJMH4TGtKY>

Chris Mars has been continuing with a successful art career. He was profiled on *MN Original* (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Yq9O7x91h1I>) and is frequently covered in contemporary art magazines (<http://hifructose.com/2015/03/19/preview-chris-mars-friends-at-copro-gallery>).

Chris Mars is contributing “Atlantis” as the lead track to the Donovan tribute album *Gazing With Tranquility: A Tribute to Donovan* under the name **Mixd Up Kidz**. The album will be released on October 16, 2015 and all proceeds will go to a charity for those with Huntington’s disease. <http://www.rollingstone.com/music/news/flaming-lips-sharon-van-etten-to-cover-donovan-on-tribute-album-20150723>

Slim Dunlap’s two solo records were re-released on in limited double vinyl format as *My New Old Records* for Record Store Day this year. You can still find copies at via amazon.com at http://www.amazon.com/gp/offer-listing/B00WFB6KM4/ref=tmm_other_meta_binding_new_olp_sr?ie=UTF8&condition=new&sr=8-1&qid=1434053789

The latest **benefit for Slim** is at *Nightingale* in Minneapolis, which will be having a “Suds For Slim” night on September 2, 2015. <http://blog.thecurrent.org/2015/08/nightingale-and-rush-river-announce-suds-for-slim-benefit-for-slim-dunlap>

The remaining **merchandise from the Replacements’ 2015 tour** is being sold at <http://replacements.bigcartel.com>

SO WHAT IF THIS IS IT?

Jen Stone describes how for the past few years, there was always the feeling of anticipation there might be another Replacements show coming. With the end of the tour and with an uncertain future, the feeling the vacation from the mundanity of life is over:

Has any fancy music journalist explored what this tour has wrought for longtime fans? Psychologically, I mean. To wit: What has the uncorking of the live versions of these songs done to us? I am waiting for the definitive thought piece on this whole affair because I am waiting to feel normal again. I certainly wasn't holding out for a tour; I never imagined it would happen. When it did, I saw shows in MLPS, Arizona and LA, and I still couldn't believe it was happening. I just jumped around and sang and tried not to cry every time they started up a new song. Dreamlike. For some 20 years, you hear Unsatisfied on tape in a thousand different ways. In cars, trains, planes, closets. You think you get it. Then, you hear the real thing on a minor league baseball field in the fall. That rasp. Damn. It's not a song. It's an exorcism scored to the loveliest guitar ever really. Ever since the second show in LA, every day, it has crossed my mind to buy a plane ticket and crash the next gig. I believe I could be intellectually fulfilled by sweeping up the stage. I believe it would be enough to be placed in charge of the cigarette supply. Pretend the 'Mats had done it back then the way they're doing it now. What then? College, law school, home ownership, paying taxes...I might well have said fuck it all. I might well have followed the band. I could have sold jerky out of the trunk of my car. Then again, would it be what it was on this tour had the band not shelved itself for so long? Good winemakers know how to identify a squirrely young red that's great now but just too complicated and asinine to handle. They know that if they cellar it and it makes the trip through time, it will become a more noble version of itself. I heard that. At every show. I swear I did. So, I guess it's back to my norm-core little life now. I have that insane guitar toss at the Palladium seared into my brain like I witnessed some kind of crime. Back to the records. Back to the legal briefs. Back to going to the occasional show by the occasional band that is occasionally great, but never Replacements great, because as every 'Mats fan knows that inexplicable shit doesn't exist. Back to picking cotton and, well, you know the rest.

Brian Spitz:

I was 8 when they broke up. I was 20 when my buddy Bill showed me the way: the iconic 'Let It Be' album cover, letting me borrow his copy of 'Tim,' and even pointing out the redeeming qualities of slightly lesser PW solo albums like 'Eventually.' Been a convert ever since and I'm so glad I was able to see them in Philadelphia. I hope a new album comes because I'm a selfish fan. But if this really is it, that's fine. They gave us exactly everything they could and maybe even a little more. Thanks, Replacements, you fucks!

Chris Mukina:

I slept in ditches.
Ate Paul Bunyan sized donuts and sandwiches.
Felt satisfaction during Unsatisfied.
Went all the way to Midway.
And on the way back I cried.
Gave my best friend a shiner.
Soaked it in whiskey at the CC Club later.
Who would have thunk.
That I danced with the godfather of punk.
To all of the goobs, ladies, and gents.
We're all here together because of this group of musicians, their name escapes me right now... George Wendt really likes them.
Umm anyways, it was fun while it lasted. I'm gonna go get busted up on Hamm's.

fin.

“Summer should get a fucking speeding ticket.”

- *unknown*