



54:40 played Pub Flamingo on September 22 to 24, giving an impressive show of older songs and new material from "Show me", their newest release. Here we have (from left to right) Phil Comparelli, Neil Osborne and Brad Merritt.

## 54:40 thunder through old and new

by Payne Schwarz

You can't describe 54:40 live. You can't describe 54:40 live. You can't describe 54:40 live. All you can do is experience it.

54:40 played three nights at Pub Flamingo last week to packed crowds, giving undoubtedly some of the most impressive shows ever seen at the pub. They thundered through their latest release *Show Me* as well as other previously released songs from their 2nd L.P. *54:40*.

Opened by local band, **Black Pool**, each concert displayed an impressive variety of energy, from restraint and control, to pure passion and fury.

The mood of the evening was initiated by the up-and-coming local band **Black Pool**. They served as an appetizer, playing a well balanced mix of original and cover songs.

When 54:40 came to the stage, they did it with a wall of power. This was kept up constantly for well over eighty minutes as the band played their hard-edged alternative rock music. The impassioned lyrics, sung by lead singer/guitarist Neil Osborne, captured the audience's attention better than the driving, forceful rhythm of the band itself.

They were tight, and always together, as they breathed new life into their older singles *Baby Ran* and *I Go Blind*. Their newer songs had a maturity and complexity about them that demonstrates exactly how good this band is. The most recent singles *Walk in Line*, *One Day in Your Life*, and *One Gun* demonstrated a newfound vitality in the undiluted energy and

exceptional clarity of the songs, both musically and vocally. The live power of these songs is absolutely captivating. Throughout each concert, the dance floor was constantly overflowing as people danced their way through the entire set. Neil Osborne portrayed the aloof professionalism of the band, seldom talking to the audience, yet always managing to keep the intimate atmosphere of the small pub intact; he had a magnetism that was only magnified by the presence of the rest of the band. The fluid bass lines, the graceful, driving guitar, and solid drumming served as an excellent base on which to put Neil's impassioned lyrics. Listening to 54:40 live, one can't help but wonder how the band can record anything so powerful on vinyl.

Indeed, a comparison of 54:40 live to their records will cause the listener slight disappointment; 54:40's albums are excellently recorded and produced, but they unfortunately fall short of capturing the live energy of the band. 54:40 have the urgency, power, and aggression of the raw garage band, with the polish and finesse of a seasoned group. Their live show is an undeniable mixture of intensity and skill, power and passion. Indeed, the only criticism that can be given on 54:40's recent *Show Me* tour is that the show was not long enough — even with the twenty minute encore, and a solid sixty-five minute concert.

After all is said, 54:40 live is difficult to describe; they have to be seen to be believed, and they are beyond comparison. You can't describe 54:40 live, you must experience it.



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