

Concert Review - Northeast Performer Magazine February 2010

CONCERT REVIEW

Carrie Ferguson - Jose Ayerve

Iron Horse Music Hall

February 28, 2010

Christopher Wilkey - Northeast Performer Magazine

*The evening started with Jose Ayerve. He performed a strong set. His songs were well-crafted yet stripped down and raw. He was a man and his guitar laying out the music for everyone to feel. He got the room warmed up and the crowd ready for Carrie Ferguson and her band. We were there to celebrate the release of her debut album *Riding on the Back of the Wind*. The record is great. The songs are catchy and the production is spectacular. It has a down-home rootsy feel with just the right touches of rock and pop mixed in. Carrie and her band did an amazing job of presenting the songs with the spit and fire of a live performance without losing the nailed-perfect precision of the studio.*

J.J. O'Connell led the way with his dynamic, tight drumming. Paul Kochanski's bass playing was right there with him the whole way, laying a solid foundation for Jim Henry's dobro and guitar to work across. Amy Oelsner's backing vocals gave the melodies a velvety richness while Emily Brien's fiddle was like the breeze in your hair. Carrie charmed us all with her piano, and when she picked it up, her acoustic guitar.

The inside of the Iron Horse looks like a big barn that's been turned into a hillbilly nightclub. It's full of exposed beams and plank floors with table service and a menu. Carrie's songs were right at home there. "Liar Liar" had everyone dancing in their seats. "Girls Like Me" brought the sold-out crowd to catcalls. Chris Scanlon grabbed a guitar and joined the band for "Small White Rock" as the crowd helped sing the melody. This is Carrie's debut album, but she controlled the stage with a grace and presence which was absolutely endearing. Anyone in the room who didn't already adore her must have by the end of the evening.