The INDIGO GIRLS have been playing together since high school, and their intertwining music and theatrical enthusiasm show the day of their concert last December. Some press official came in and told us all that they would come in, take to us, do some signing and get out. They walked in, Amy Ray and Emily, sat on a couch and said, "A press conference, huh?" and we all laughed together.

They joked with us for a good hour about their music, their childhood in Atlanta, GA, our cold weather, and their good fortune and success. Someone from the back of the room yelled, "The New York Times says you take yourselves too seriously." We all laughed for quite a while, though, I laughed somewhat seriously, remembering their lyrics, "I am intense, I am in need. I am in love, and I feel forsaken." But finally, when they had caught their breaths, they smiled, and Emily said, "The New York Times..." We laughed freely.

The Indigo Girls emanated a comfortable, relaxed air; they argued with each other, whispered that the only place they couldn't stand to play was Austin; they had us pull our chairs into a circle around them, and we all talked; it wasn't an introduction. It was like their concert that night: They took away the separation between themselves and the audience. It was wonderful. I listened to the screams and squawks of the audience, just as they had for the press. They played with their guitars, their voices, and a bassist, Sarah Lee, who added a tremendous kick to the music. They truly played; they had a good time, thanking the audience for listenin to them enjoy themselves. Their sounds gloriously filled the Orpheum - which is a beautiful hall, and deserves such fine musicians.

They had cutouts of the sun, leaves, moons, and -earthly images like clock cards projected yellow on the blue curtains behind them. The peaceful harmony of their visual images with the fidelity of their voices created an aesthetic delight that the audience clearly adored.

Amy's raw voice and Emily's sweeter tones mixed and complemented each other beautifully. Their songwriting reflects that they have very different styles, but both deal with a common thread: that deal on the appeal of their music, saying that the folk and singer-songwriter people they have talked to all say the same thing. There is hope in their music. "We're going to do a song on life now."

The audience screamed. We were all there, and somehow the fact that we were all focused on their performance brought all of us together. Live music is always intense, seeing people creating, while other people just can't help but be exciting, but here there was more: two women, excited about life, effusing the audience with a tremendous feeling of... of hope.

August Wilson's Fences continues through February 3 at the New Repertory Theatre.

The INDIGO GIRLS
Dec. 10 at the Orpheum Theatre.

By DAVID ZAPOL

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