THE ARTS

Astonishing Twin Peaks confuses all but true fans

TWIN PEAKS: FIRE WALK WITH ME
Written by David Lynch and Robert Engels
Directed by David Lynch
Now playing at Loews Janus.
Starring Sheryl Lee, Moira Kelly, Directed by David Lynch.

WIN

singer/guitarist/songwriter, Paul Weller, had
By the time of their breakup, the Jam had
Mod ideals of the Who and the Small Faces.
together with the bands of the Punk move-
songs about what it was like to be young in
up of three teenagers wore sharp black suits,
By Paula Cuccurullo
Go! Discs America.

PAL

Paul Weller hopes for new audience with solo effort

Weller back in everyone’s favorite decade, the Seventies, something
interesting happened on the British music scene. One punk band made up of
teenagers were sharp black suits, carried vintage guitars, and played angry
songs about what it was like to be young in London at that time. They
were lumped together with the pack of the Punk movement but were actually
more devoted to the Mod ideals of the Who and the Small Faces.

But Weller wanted to move on to a
different sound, and thus made the daring
to break up the Jam at the height of their
popularity to form his new band, the Style
Council, with keyboardist Mick Talbot in
1983. This gave him the opportunity to
experiment more with the American and Northern
(UK) soul sound he favored for his own lis-
tening pleasure. The Council stayed together
for over seven years, almost as long as the
Jam; in the UK, they were never as popular as
Weller’s first band, but they were beloved by
fans of jazz, funk, and pop, alike.

The only thing Weller’s two bands seemed
to have in common was their inability to make
a lasting impression on the music scene in the
United States, which is a shame considering
the heights of popularity they reached in their
own country, the rest of Europe, and particu-
larly Japan. It seemed as if the rest of the
world found something important that most of
this country didn’t. But some hope remains,
because almost two decades after he first
played in a pub outside of London, Paul
Weller has a new album and a tour poised to
win over the critics by his side.

This time, it’s on his own. His band does
include a number of former Style Council
musicians, however, including longtime col-
league Steve White, the trotting bassist of
acid jazz group the Jazz Renegades.
Together they have put together a sound
which marks a turn towards the guitar
rockey of the Jam but with the jazz/funk
sensibilities of the Council intact.
In concert on July 25 in New York City,
the band was focused and having an excellent
time. They played songs from all three periods
of Weller’s career, performing most of the
new songs for the first time ever in America.
The songs are less jazzy than those of the
Style Council and take more of an influence
from rock bands of mid-1960s Britain (Rush, Pink
Floyd, the Beatles), but are far from being strictly
modal or classic rock. The live versions
were not as polished as those on the album but
benefited from that roughness and the good
humor of the musicians. Weller himself was
in rare form, thrusting about with his guitar
and enjoying audience singalongs; he seemed
surprised at how much of the audience knew
the words to the older songs.

The self-titled album consists of twelve
songs recorded during and since the breakup of the Style Council; one, “Round and
Round,” was first heard in a much different
version on the UK House album Free Your
Feelings by Shorty (featuring Weller’s wife Dee C. Lee). The lyrics are more retro-
spective than on much of Weller’s previous
work, dealing with his past, his present, and
his fears and hopes for the future. Listeners
familiar with his previous work will be sur-
prised at the complete absence of overt politi-
cal statements on the album. Instead he has
taken a more personal approach to putting
forth his philosophy of life, and it works.
Hopefully it will appeal to both sets of his
fans and now convert as well.

Look for the release of the album on Go! Discs America/Polygram on October 6, after
the release of the first single in late September. Weller and his band will be play-
ing in America after tour stops in the
UK, hoping to appear in the Greater Boston area sometime in November or December.