



www.LivingSocial.com

Ads by Google



**Concert Review: Drake**

July 22, 2010



**Centennial Concert Hall, Winnipeg. - July 21, 2010**

By DARRYL STERDAN, Winnipeg Sun

E-MAIL TO A FRIEND PRINT PAGE WRITE JAM! SHARE [Facebook] [Twitter]

WINNIPEG - There's a difference between phenomenon and phenomenal. And I'm not talking about two letters.



I'm talking about five letters: D to the R to the A-K-E. The Toronto rapper born Aubrey Graham is clearly a sensation — along with a lady named Gaga and a kid named Justin, he's the hottest thing in music right now. Dude was nominated for Grammys and took home Junos even before his debut album Thank Me Later — which has already gone platinum — dropped last month.

Impressive? Indisputably. But as a performer, well, let's just say that the 23-year-old hip-hopper clearly has plenty of charisma and raw talent. But just as clearly, he still needs to up his game before he can truly hold his own in the bigs.

Not that Drizzy was slacking when his Away From Home tour stopped at Centennial Concert Hall Wednesday night. With the help of a boombastic PA that shook the building like an earthquake, a stroboscopic light show that was blinding and blazing, and a funky quintet (including a fleet-fingered DJ) that pumped out the jams, Drake and a sold-out crowd of 2,300 teenagers turned the classy confines of Centennial Concert Hall into the city's largest nightclub for 70 fast-moving minutes.

"Tonight's so special," the black-clad Drake claimed after taking the stage an hour late (which isn't too bad for hip-hop time). "They finally let me come back to Canada. I'm gonna ask you to do one thing — just show me a good motherf---ing time."

The kids — mostly young girls hoochied up in tiny skirts and boyfriends in hip-hop gear — were only too happy to oblige, rising to their feet for the opening beats of 9 AM in Dallas and staying there until the final notes of Over. Along the way, they held up their end by belting out the choruses to bangers like I'm Goin' In, Unstoppable and the poppy BedRock, chanting along with Drake's demand to "Free Weezy" (that would be his currently incarcerated mentor Lil Wayne for those of you who are not down with the homies as I am), and generally gyrated along with every one of the band's bumptious beats, which came thick and fast during the 21-song set (at least I think it was 21; he called a couple of audibles during the show, so I might have missed something).

In truth, those beats might have come a little too fast. Minus the guest vocalists that are a staple of rap recordings, many of Drake's songs ended up being (or at least feeling) two minutes long. Songs ended as suddenly as they began, with few tunes sticking around long enough to gain much traction. As a result, the show ended up feeling more like an extended medley. If you had ADD (or a bus to catch), maybe it was the best time you'd ever had, but it was probably disappointing for anyone who wanted to hear something other than a truncated K-Tel version of

www.LivingSocial.com Ads by Google

- Jam
- Music
  - Artists A-Z
  - Album Reviews
  - Concert Reviews
  - Concert Listings
  - SoundScan Charts
  - Lowdown Column
  - Pop Encyclopedia
  - 2010 Grammy Awards
- Movies
- Television
- Video
- Theatre
- Books
- Country
- Best of the Decade
  
- ENT Blog
- Video Clips Gallery
- RSS Feed [RSS]



www.LivingSocial.com Ads by Google

WAVE CONCERT LISTINGS

- Green Day
- Wintersleep
- John Mayer
- Lady Antebellum
- Rihanna
- Ke\$ha
- The Black Keys
- Primus

CLICK FOR MORE

BURNING QUESTION

Drake's catalog. It didn't help that the set concluded without an encore — shortly after Drake proclaimed it was "far from motherf---ing over."

Also slightly disappointing: Drake's stage presence. Granted, he's improved drastically and quickly over the past year, and now possesses a lot more casual confidence and easy affability than he had. But it's clear he's still finding his feet onstage. Or perhaps I should say he's still learning how to forget his feet. Despite the gains he's made, Drake still spends a lot of time hunched over, clutching the mic in both hands and staring at his shoes while he rhymes. And while his delivery, intelligent lyrics and flow — not to mention his singing voice — are all solid (if hardly revolutionary), his banter left something to be desired. Song introductions were clearly scripted and way too on-the-nose ("When they ask you what happened last night, I just want you to say one thing: Fireworks," he said before introducing — yes, Fireworks). His repeated shout-outs to the "ladies" and insistence that the kids "make some noise" were boring clichés. At one point he nonsensically anointed himself "Drizzy Hendrix," and claimed he and his Band of Gypsies were "gonna do it like Woodstock up in this b---h." I still have no idea where that came from.

Oddly enough, when Graham dropped the rap-star act and dealt face-to-face with fans, he came across far better. During Unthinkable, he earned points by pulling a young woman out of the audience for a slow-dance that was practically gentlemanly (despite his insistence that she could be "touched on, kissed on, licked on, sucked on" — none of which seemed to bother her). He got big cheers when he mentioned his previous job acting on *Degrassi: The Next Generation*. And he was actually pretty funny when he singled out women in the audience during *Find Your Love*. "You look like you just stepped out of a Beyoncé video and all," he told one. "You standing there like you just got a parking ticket," he scolded another. "Smile. This is once-in-a-lifetime s---."

He was right about that last line. Despite the delays and disappointments — not to mention the totally inappropriate setting — it's pretty obvious this was the last time we'll see Drake in a venue smaller than MTS Centre. Such is the way of phenoms.

And with any luck, by that point he'll have enough experience under his belt to do it all phenomenal up in this b---h.

darryl.sterdan@sunmedia.ca

Set List:

9 AM in Dallas

Forever

Unstoppable

Show Me a Good Time

Lust for Life

Fireworks

Money to Blow

Lose My Mind

I'm Going In

Every Girl In the World

Bedrock

Unthinkable

A Night Off

Successful

Say Something

Fancy

Find Your Love / Paris Morton Music

Best I Ever Had

Free Weezy

Over

**More Concert Reviews**



**Do you think Mel Gibson's career can recover from this latest scandal?**

- Yes  
 No  
 I don't care

**SUBMIT**

Results

- Katy Perry album cover titillating
- Beach Boys reunite, Wilson unsure
- Live Review: Drake in Winnipeg
- Machine rages against Arizona law
- Live Review: Sting in London, Ont.
- Heart back to classic '70s sound
- Bush planning new CD, tour
- ELP reform for anniversary show
- Color Me Badd star arrested
- Dr. Dre teams up with Bieber

- GBS can't beat Eminem on charts
- Fox starring in Eminem video?
- Neil Young's new songs reviewed
- Past comes alive for Joe Henry
- Macabre Elvis auction being held
- Britney Spears declared a fit mom
- Def Leppard takes a year off
- Live Review: Bon Jovi in T.O.
- Ice-T calls police allegations a 'lie'
- Pumpkins to put on benefit

[More Headlines](#)

## JAM! ESSENTIALS



### Lowdown column

Get the inside scoop on the Canadian music industry with Karen Bliss.



### Who's coming and when

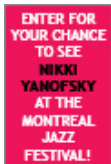
Want to know when your favourite band is coming to town? Check out Clive, JAM Music's extensive Canadian concert listings.



### TV Listings

Wondering what's on tonight? Check out our TV listings for the complete schedule in your area.

## CONTEST CORNER



Did you win a trip to the Montreal Jazz Festival?

- [Find out here!](#)
- [Berkeley Church concert winners!](#)

- [Kid Rock contest winners](#)

### ENT Blog:



The real "soup nazi" is back

Lost ship in Ground Zero

A secret lies beneath the crossroads of the world

## TOP 5 ALBUMS IN CANADA

1. Eminem: Recovery
2. Great Big Sea: Safe Upon...
3. Jack Johnson: To the Sea
4. Korn: Korn III
5. Drake: Thank Me Later

Courtesy Nielsen SoundScan Cda

[CLICK FOR FULL CHARTS](#)

SUBSCRIBE TO THE JAM! NEWSLETTER

[SUBSCRIBE NOW](#)

