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Dinosaur weave a Mezcal Dream

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Quiet percussion at first, soon joined by the sounds of classical cello and subdued guitar. After about a minute the tempo and rhythm takes a dramatic turn, as the hallucinatory composition 'Mezcal Dreams' gets into full swing, and which at its finish is met with enthusiastic applause from the small but appreciative audience.

A gem of a gig on a Wednesday night at Mullarkey's, and those adventurous enough to check out a relatively obscure instrumental act were richly rewarded.

Dinosaur (not to be confused with the similarly named indie legends, though they are a three-piece) consists of guitarist Aengus Hackett, cellist Maya Fridman and drummer/percussionist Mauricio Ramirez.

The three met at the Amsterdam Conservatory of Music, where Maya (from Moscow) was studying classical, with Mauricio (from Colombia) and Aengus (from the West of Ireland) studying jazz.

Combining elements of those schools or music, many other influences are evident as well, including the geographic and musical backgrounds of these superb instrumentalists. Trying to describe what they sound like is difficult, though they are somewhat self-billed as experimental jazz-folk-rock. Though original, unique and deserving of attentive listening, the music is far from inaccessible and seems to strike a chord with the varied tastes of the members of the audience.

During the intermission, however, the crowd falls into conversation amongst themselves and with the friendly members of the band. As Dinosaur takes the stage for the second set, the danger looms that some may talk over the music. But it doesn't take long before the room is silent and remains mesmerised straight through till the end of their final piece, 'Empanada Galactica', where they receive a spirited demand for an encore.

Delightedly obliging, they return to their instruments and as the final composition begins with Mauricio lightly teasing his cymbals with strings of beads, you would literally have heard a pin drop.

As 'Kite' finishes, the crowd still wants more but the group takes a bow, leaves the stage, and are soon approached by their new admirers. Unfortunately they have no CDs for sale, though their future plans include more recording and another Irish tour.

They promise to come back to Mullarkey's, so if this sounds like your kind of music, don't miss them next time around.

Jamie Howard

For more info, sounds and video, check out www.dinosaurtrio.com – Dinosaur played Mullarkey's Bar, Clifden, on July 23

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