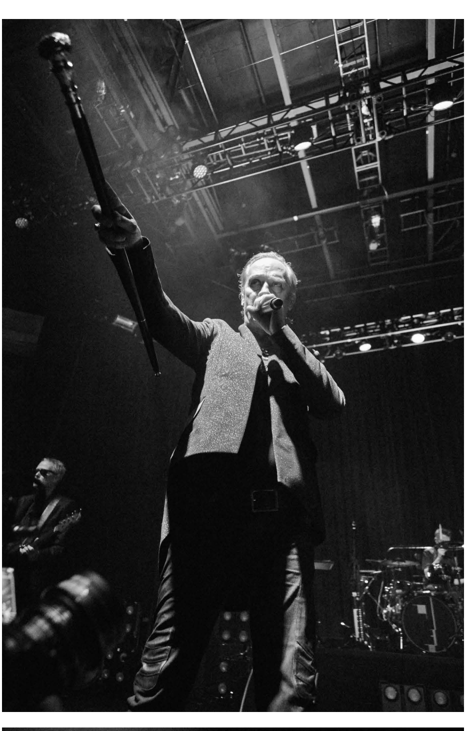
IN ATTENDANCE

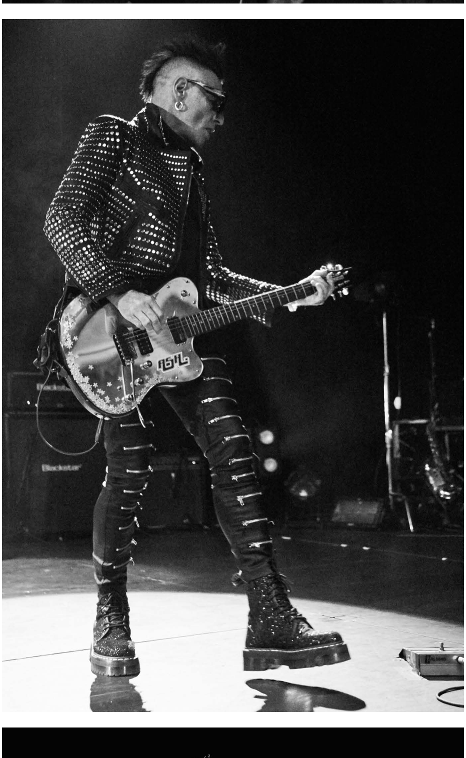
BAUHAUS REUNION

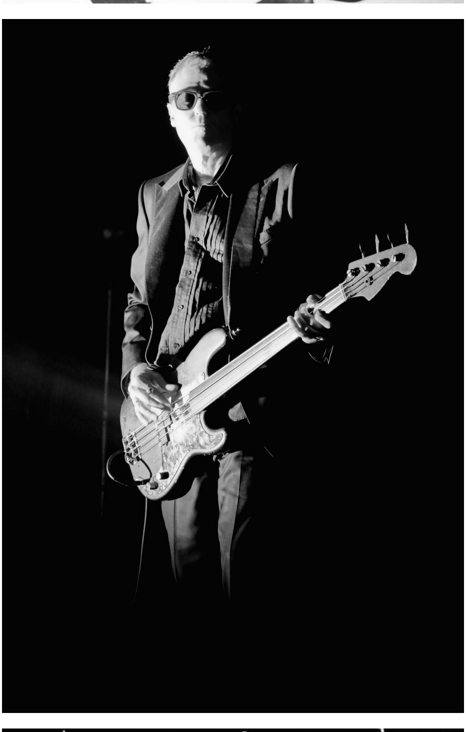
DECEMBER 16, 2019 | ELIZABETH RHODES | LEAVE A COMMENT

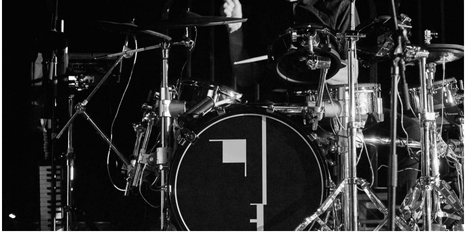
It's hard to express how it feels to experience something that takes the collective energy of a room to a new frequency and essentially lifts you out of the natural world and into a different, surreal space. This is the aim of art and the power of ritual. One could argue that going to see music performed live is a form of ritual, an essential part of magic that serves this same purpose of elevating and directing energy.

In the years since Bauhaus' official end in 1983, all members had gone on to pursue solo careers and participate in other projects, notably Peter Murphy's solo career and collaboration with Mick Karn in Dali's Car as well as Love and Rockets (Daniel Ash, David J and Kevin Haskins) and Tones on Tail (Daniel Ash, Kevin Haskins and Glenn Campling). After their most recent reunion over ten years ago along with the release of their final album *Go Away White* (2008), many fans believed we had seen the last of Bauhaus.



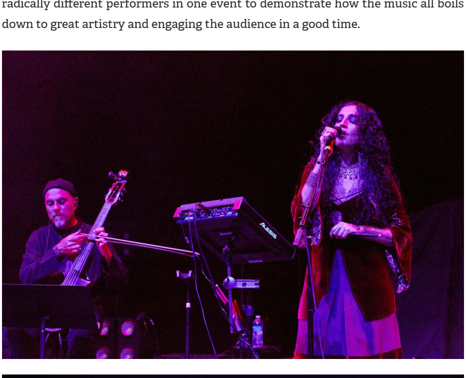




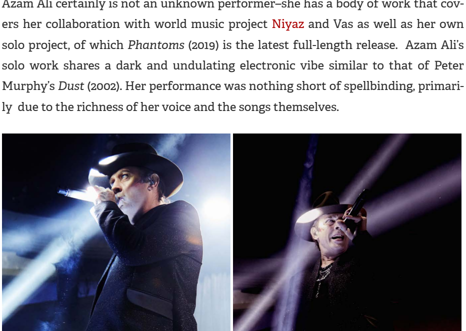


When the news spread earlier this year about Bauhaus performing again, fans immediately flocked to secure tickets and subsequent performances were scheduled to accommodate demand, resulting in the three performances held in Los Angeles over the course of one month this autumn.

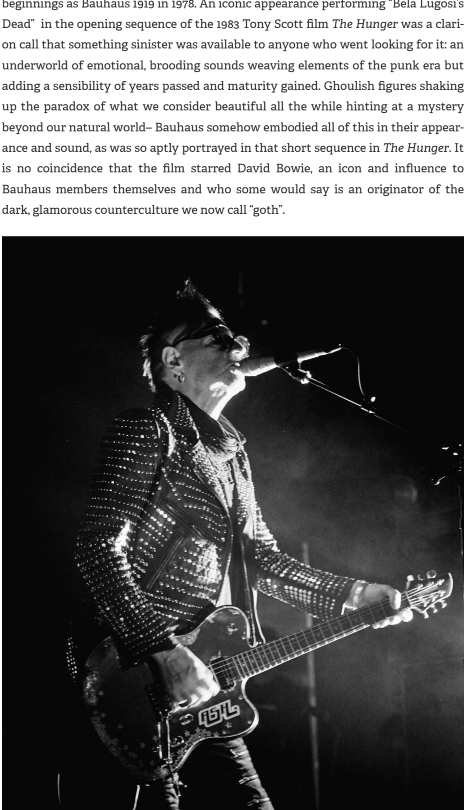
The opener for the third and final night of Bauhaus' performances was renowned musician and composer Azam Ali. The idea of selecting an opening act has traditionally been to whet the aural palette of the listener and provide an opportunity for a lesser-known artist to have access to a larger audience and establish connections between bands that might be in the same genre or, contrastingly, showcase radically different performers in one event to demonstrate how the music all boils down to great artistry and engaging the audience in a good time.



Azam Ali certainly is not an unknown performer–she has a body of work that covers her collaboration with world music project Niyaz and Vas as well as her own solo project, of which *Phantoms* (2019) is the latest full-length release. Azam Ali's solo work shares a dark and undulating electronic vibe similar to that of Peter Murphy's *Dust* (2002). Her performance was nothing short of spellbinding, primarily due to the richness of her voice and the songs themselves.

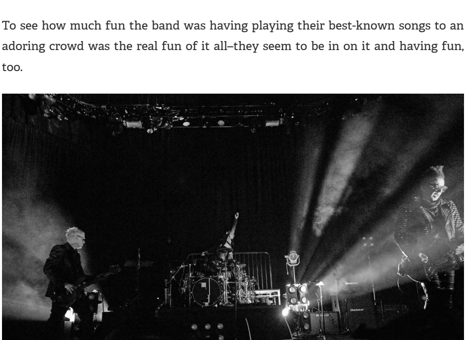


Bauhaus' legacy is evident in their omnipresence in alternative culture since their beginnings as Bauhaus 1919 in 1978. An iconic appearance performing "Bela Lugosi's Dead" in the opening sequence of the 1983 Tony Scott film *The Hunger* was a clarion call that something sinister was available to anyone who went looking for it: an underworld of emotional, brooding sounds weaving elements of the punk era but adding a sensibility of years passed and maturity gained. Ghoulish figures shaking up the paradox of what we consider beautiful all the while hinting at a mystery beyond our natural world– Bauhaus somehow embodied all of this in their appearance and sound, as was so aptly portrayed in that short sequence in *The Hunger*. It is no coincidence that the film starred David Bowie, an icon and influence to Bauhaus members themselves and who some would say is an originator of the dark, glamorous counterculture we now call "goth".



To see Bauhaus perform is to witness something very special. It is a pleasure to watch each musician on stage perform as the master of their domain and display a fluency with the material that only years of practice can allow — Peter Murphy fronting the band as vocalist (and occasionally playing a variety of instruments), Daniel Ash offering guitar and backing vocals, David J. on bass providing the heavy, resonant riffs the band is renowned for and Kevin Haskins on drums (a dark horse figure of the group and no less of an influence than anyone more visible onstage).

To see how much fun the band was having playing their best-known songs to an adoring crowd was the real fun of it all–they seem to be in on it and having fun, too.



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All photos by Saryn Christina.

Check out our interview with Azam Ali in our Winter 2019 Issue.

-Elizabeth Rhodes

Elizabeth Rhodes is the Associate Editor of Auxiliary. Based in Los Angeles, she is a writer, DJ, modern mystic, and astrology junkie.

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