

## Gunther Murphy's

1638 W. Belmont  
Chicago, IL 60657  
773.472.5137

Type Of Music: Rock/Eclectic  
Atmosphere: 7.5  
Prices: 8  
Selection: Beer: 7 Liquor: 7  
Sightline: 8  
Acoustics: 7.5  
Overall: 8.8  
Sound System: House System Provided

With a wide, eclectic mix of people, great house tunes (Sinead O'Connor, The English Beat, U2, Police, and much more), an extremely polite bar staff (one of the few times in recent memory anyone referred to me as a gentleman), along with cozy and ample seating including several hideaway nooks and comfortable booths, Gunther Murphy's is hard to beat. Conveniently located just west of the busiest parts of downtown Lakeview on Belmont, it's easily accessible from both Lake Shore Drive and the Kennedy Expressway.

Inside the bar, the pub tables and stools are authentically Irish, so you get to sit right down low to the ground. I guess the theory is that this may shorten the distance to the floor if you happen to topple over! And what about the music room? For a cover of \$5 to \$10, you can hear a host of live acts in a range of styles on Fridays and Saturdays year 'round. Whether rock, folk, techno, or experimental, recent appearances by The Muck Brothers, The Websters, Trig-

ger Gospel, and Satya Grahā confirm Gunther's place as a premier showcase for up-and-coming rock and eclectic artists. On the night I was there, I saw a double bill with



Lanterns, the new project by pedal-steel guitar master Henry Frayne, along My Scarlet Life.

The sight line from the back is better if you're tall, and seating in the music room is clustered along the walls, at stage right and stage left. Fortunately,



the superb acoustics at Gunther's more than make up for any deficiencies in the view. The room holds about 250, with room for about another hundred or so in the bar. In addition, the restrooms are above-average clean (the men's is, anyway - you ladies are on your own here), which is always a plus in my book.

Bar food is negligible, but there are plenty of take-outs and eat-ins nearby, and the in-house selection of brew

and spirits is superb. You'll know right away from all the antique Guinness posters that the rich, brown stout is a house specialty. Access to the bar is generally good despite the compact layout, and the staff is not only polite, but also attentive.

For a live music nightclub that's only slightly off the beaten path, there's always something going on at Gunther's. Just call ahead for a schedule of upcoming events.  
ITM