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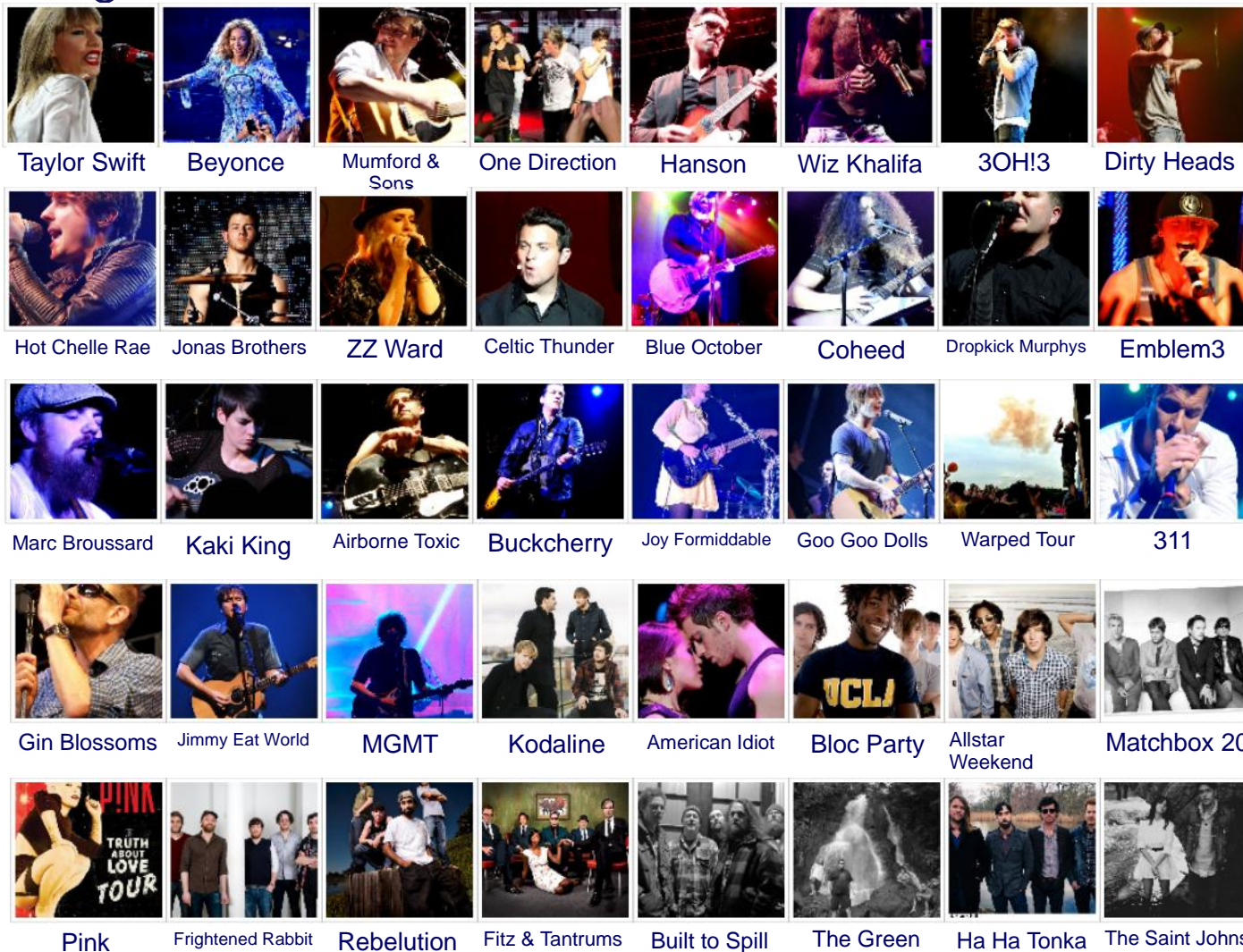
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## 2013



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311

July 12, 2013

Comcast Center, Mansfield, MA

One highlight of the summer which I look forward to every year is 311's Unity tour. This show is never anything but incredibly fantastic and the fact that you can tailgate for hours before the show in the parking lot of the Comcast Center is an added bonus. This show normally takes place on a Saturday and it was strange and a little innerving that it took place on a Friday this year. So instead of drinking beers poolside with friends before the show, I had to wait for everyone to get out of work – which really put a damper on everybody's pregame drinking/tailgating enjoyment. However this minor setback served us well when we arrived for we did not have to wait in traffic to park.

One of my friends' and I were particularly excited to see Cypress Hill, who was one of the openers. However, unfortunately for us, we just missed them due to Ticketmaster being an hour off in their published time of when the show started. As we found our seats and were waiting for the crew to change the set, I could not help but notice the abundance of empty seats that were all around us. This sight was very odd because typically this venue is packed for this show. But again, the fact that the show was taking place on Friday instead of Saturday most likely was a major factor.

When 311 came out and began to play those empty seats were filled immediately! They started out playing some of their greatest hits and got everyone pumped up. Throughout the whole show they played incredibly strong with great enthusiasm and passion for what they were doing, and showed appreciation for their fans in the crowd that were cheering and chanting for them. I love watching the solo performances by the drummer and the guitarists. It's great to experience the band play as a whole but there's also something special about when the individual artist has the chance to really showcase his talents. The drummer plays with such a finessed coordination that just leaves me in awe in how flawlessly he can play so many drums, so rapidly, with such controlled rhythms. Then there are the guitarists' solos that just leave you mesmerized. I love the glowing lights on the neck of the bass guitar too – they add to the ambiance. The drumline they do after the drummer does his solo is probably my favorite part of the show. I think it's great how each member is so well rounded in their musical ability, and I believe that it serves to emphasize an authentic genuineness of their artistry. They wrapped up their show by playing "Creatures" and then left with everyone chanting for 311.

Article By: Michelle Roncevic



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## 3OH!3

October 17, 2013

House of Blues, Boston, MA

Hundreds of teenagers cramped against the House of Blues stage on a crisp October night to dance their pants off. They came ready with sparkles, high heels and skin tight pants to throw their hands in the air and attempt to sneak a beer from an older fellow-fan (I know this because I got asked twice).

3OH!3 has a reputation for being a bit wild but also a bit insanely fun. They bump the bass loud and throw on their long list of hits and the kids just dance away. Nathaniel Motte and Sean Foreman lead the march as they hop around stage and throw a few winks at the first row. They know what they are there to provide and they pull it off.

Perhaps best known for their hits with female pop sensations Katy Perry and Kesha, the guys are picking up traction as they tour the world. If you've never danced to "First Kiss"... well, I just wouldn't believe you if you told me that. Everyone has and next to add to your bucket list is to do it with 3OH!3 themselves. Trust me, it's unforgettable for so many reasons.

Their most recent album *Omens* follows trend and provides their fan base with the tunes they would expect. With songs like "Hungover", "Live for the Weekend" and the funny "Two Girlfriends" that chronicles the difficulty of making sure your two significant others don't run into each other.

Perhaps it was because the Sox were in the playoffs and the dads and I were in the back, glancing at the TVs playing the game, but some of it just seems a little inappropriate: from the half-naked teenage girls to the heavy drinking songs when there has maybe never been less of a line at the bar anywhere. But the songs were up-beat and catchy and who am I to judge a bunch of dancing fools.

Article and Photos By: Teresa Reilly

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## Airborne Toxic Event with Kodaline

May 20, 2013

House of Blues, Boston, MA

Being the second time catching Airborne Toxic Event come to town, I was already nervous before even one note was played. Lead singer Mikel Jollett hanging from a balcony at the Orpheum Theater still gave me nightmares. Did he do it again anyway despite my desperate pleas from the middle of the audience not climb the speakers and then scale the railings? Of course he did. Singing the whole time.

It does feel almost unfair to start with that though because it makes it seem like it overshadowed the music. It didn't. It actually amplifies the passion that this band brings to the stage every time they play.

They give their fans everything they could want and a little bit more. The music remained on-pace and with even more anthem-like music such as "Timeless" from their new album *Such Hot Blood*, their audience is becoming more and more evolved. For a band with a bit more mellow tone, this is no small feat.

On top of all that, Airborne Toxic Event has managed to bring their full sound to the stage. With some songs such as "Some Time Around Midnight" being a bit more haunting and some such as "Changing" that are catchy and foot tapping, I felt myself half the time saying "how are they going to bring this song to life" to "there are far too many instruments up there to make this sound right".

Once again, I was wrong each and every time but the pure instrumental skills of this band are something to see when they come to town next.

Article By: Teresa Reilly

Photos By: Melissa D'Amico

Lucky for us, we actually got to chat and grab a beer with the opening band Kodaline who are a soulful Irish band that are touring the country and writing songs along the way. So take a listen if you like Irish accents and fun American facts I bet you never knew.

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## Allstar Weekend

February 20, 2013

House of Blues, Boston, MA

You're 16 years-old and you've been waiting all year for your favorite boy band to come to town. They finally do, you're in your new dress that you bought just for this occasion and you've been waiting outside for hours to be one of the first in and get a coveted spot up front. The lights go down, your heart starts racing, and you just can't help screaming your face off. They come onstage and it's everything you hoped for. Then, only a few songs in, the band does the unthinkable and invites pretty much everyone who can fit onstage. You, your hot new dress, and your best friends are now swinging your hips to "Dance Forever" with Allstar Weekend. Maybe you even squeeze a hug out of lead singer Zachary Porter as you run off stage.

No longer being a 16 year-old girl, the night wasn't quite as epic for me but the rest of the audience was so genuinely happy, it was infectious. I bopped along a bit and could not stop smiling as one fan in particular stole the show up onstage, grabbing the mic and jumping on top of speakers. Those are 15 minutes of rock-star fame she'll never forget.

Being the modern boy band that they are, Allstar Weekend impressed me with their synthesizer hits that really were just meant for dancing. It was fun, up-beat music with a lot of bass. I must admit that the band looked tired though. Their energy didn't quite match the music or the crowd's but no one seemed to mind. Being fresh off the Disney channel, I was expecting ear-to-ear smiles like the rest but the band wasn't completely committed and perhaps that's due to this being their last headlining tour before taking a hiatus. Not to worry though, they'll be back in town with the Warped Tour for a little summer fun. Swing by their set if you're looking for something to shake your booty to.

Article By: Teresa Reilly



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## Amp Your Campus: Hot Chelle Rae & Sammy

Adams, 2013

House of Blues, Boston, MA

Back in February students across the country were asked to vote for their town in an attempt to prove that they were the most passionate music fans. No surprise to us Bostonians, our city won. They won in a big way because only a few weeks later Hot Chelle Rae and Cambridge-native Sammy Adams rolled into town to perform for a select few contest winners at the House of Blues.

You don't have to be a college student to appreciate the magic of a free concert. There's nothing better and I have honestly never seen a group of concert-goers so genuinely happy and ready to enjoy themselves. I am going to go ahead and give a good amount of credit to Music Choice bringing in DJ Rob Dinero to fill-in the pre-show gaps. That standing around before a show can be brutal with the house music playing lightly in the background while you're feet are starting to hurt but a DJ brought a whole new kind of energy.

Now in full disclosure, weeks before I even heard about this event, I had been listening to Hot Chelle Rae's *Whatever* obsessively. It's fun, witty and even more honestly, great for break-ups. The appropriately named "Honestly" got me through some rough nights. So when they finally took the stage, I was completely pent-up giddy. It felt like a concert just for me as they ran through all my favorite songs, most especially my new personal anthem "Downtown Girl".

I think, however, that the size of the crowd threw them a bit off. Since only contest winners were allowed in, the audience comprised of just under 200 students which seemed to bring at least leader singer Ryan Follesé's energy down. He absolutely jumped around and sang every key but there was a spark missing in his tone.

Sammy Adams was the opposite. He gave the performance his all as he passionately sang "Boston's Boy", not even a week after his city was locked down while SWAT teams went door to door tracking one half of the marathon bombers.

"It's cool to see the city recover so well," said Sammy in an interview before the show. When then asked if he'd consider putting out a track about it he responded, "I'd love to do something like that. It's cool to see how many people have done it. But it has to be good!"

No one has any doubts it wouldn't be. His new single "LA Story" with Mike Posner is spot-on and bound to be a hit. He has the passion and skill to continue bringing his music to the masses.

As Boston continues to recover, it was inspiring to see one of our own throw his heart into performing for his city.

Article and Photos By: Teresa Reilly

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## Beyonce

July 23, 2013

TD Garden, Boston, MA

In the middle of her set at the TD Garden, Beyonce took her show to the middle of the arena to be just a little closer to the thousands who came out to see her. Then she pointed to three women standing right up against the stage and thanked them for coming before belting into "Survivor". For a city still in recovery, it was inspiring to see these three women, each of whom had lost a limb during the Boston Marathon bombings, throw their fist in the air in triumphant of the extreme difficulties they had endured.

It is her best live characteristic. Mrs. Carter has fan interaction down. I have seen plenty of big name celebrities not even so much as bat an eyelash at their front row but not Beyonce. She invited those women to the show but beyond that, she made them and so many others feel special with a quick smile and if you were really lucky, maybe even a wink.

But in 2008 when Beyoncé started to refer to herself as Sasha Fierce, I found it odd and eccentric. But last week, within the first few minutes of her taking the stage at the Garden, I completely got it. This woman is fierce in a way that defines the word. She exudes confidence and when people say, "every woman wants to be her and every man wants to be with", I'm confident it has never been truer.

Let's start with her voice. Everyone knows it's exceptional but the power behind it is what makes her one of the greatest. To fill a 17,000 person arena with one long note is why said arena was completely sold-out from the beginning. On songs like "Irreplaceable", it's heart-stopping to hear her so fully hit every note.

If that doesn't make you jealous, take her post-pregnancy figure. She was rocking spandex in a way that the majority of Americans never could on their best day. Yet every costume change was just a small accent to the power of her music and her voice. While the dance moves were enticing (and if you didn't do the dance to "Single Ladies" you're just lying) she didn't have to move much, except for a few well-timed dominant poses, featuring a hand on the hip, to put on a beautiful and inspiring performance.

Shows like the one that Beyonce put on, take people away completely away from their 9-5 and put them in a different world that is full of hope and beauty. It transforms just a few hours into a time where you, the audience member, is fierce and powerful and dominant.


Article By: Teresa Reilly

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## Bloc Party

January 22, 2013

Ogden Theater, Denver, CO

Going to see Bloc Party eight years after the release of *Silent Alarm* in 2005 was a huge treat for me. This album was definitely a favorite for me and many of my friends senior year of high school and the type of album I still remember pretty much every word of. Bloc Party draws upon a primarily British 80's influence of minimalist guitar work from artists like Joy Division and The Stone Roses and front man Kele Okereke certainly has a catchy delivery like Morrissey or Robert Smith.

One thing I've noticed in my time in Denver is how every artist that comes through town loves to comment on us being a mile high, the lack of oxygen, the mountains etc. The new comment in conjunction with that, which Kele Okereke, lead vocals, comically made, is that pot is legal (kind of) now in Colorado with the passage of Amendment 64. These two things are perfect for getting cheers playing shows out in Denver, his comment was no exception. Their show was upbeat and generally a dance party going on down on the floor. They managed to play a lot of songs off of their first album *Silent Alarm* as well as effectively mixing in some of their newer songs. I was pleased at how many people were equally excited and nostalgic about their older material but certainly appreciated how their music had evolved.

Coming out for their encore, they went with a different tempo playing "Montreal" a new song that was very much an introspective monologue from Okereke with soft drums behind. Sticking with the theme, this was followed by the softer "Truth", a fan favorite. I was on the floor at this point, trying to get my dance on and this was very much a different feel from the environment earlier. The crowd was very relaxed going into another fan favorite, "Helicopter" for their final song which was a great closing to a fun show. It was inspiring checking out an old favorite and hope that something eight years from now will prompt me to dust off their music again for old times' sake.

Article By: Christopher Beliveau



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## Blue October

[December 11, 2013](#)[House of Blues, Boston, MA](#)

It took me half the show before I was able to put my finger on just what Blue October was. They have been on constant replay for the past six months in mainstream alternative radio with their new single "Bleed Out" off their August 2013 album *Sway*. It's a powerful song with just a ton of heart right at the chorus. It's one of those you just know when to turn up. And that song is why I signed-up for the show but I may have been the only one.

Expecting to walk into a room full of 20 year-olds and instead find 30 to 40 year-old couples is confusing. It's disorienting, especially when the band goes on half an hour early. Then you really need to get your thinking cap on when the pit is full of audience-goers crammed together and pushed up against each other. Then it's just gross when one of them starts puking and is escorted out while some poor security guard takes out the trash.

However as grunge song after alternative grunge song was played, it dawned on me. This wasn't some new hip band that was a little retro-alternative; this was an actual band from the actual 1990's that had made their name and created a solid fan base nearly twenty years ago. The scene came together and as I began jotting down song names ("Angels in Everything" and "Hate Me"), it appears that Blue October has rediscovered their magic. That bit of grit matched with a lot of passion, comes through on both their early stuff and new tunes. With their new album, they officially have become a band that has hit that rare music gold in two separate decades.

Article and Photos By: Teresa Reilly

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## Buckcherry

May 31, 2013

### Hampton Beach Casino, NH

Some of my more drunken memories involve Buckcherry. Whether it's a high school party that I'm taken back to or the beaches of NJ during Bamboozle, the band has that certain appeal of just letting loose and enjoying some rock. Last Friday after a 95 degree day, the only place we all wanted to be was right along the beach, cold beer in hand.

After finding the perfect spot under one of the few ceiling fans, I raised my glass to the biker guy next to me and got ready for a wild show. Josh Todd and the guys did not disappoint. With mid-song guitar solos and a heavy drum back beat, the band is loud and passionate. You can see how much they feel every note on their dripping faces. Plus, with Todd's definitive rock voice, there is no denying exactly their style.

Not for the underage and definitely not for the faint, their live show message was pretty on-par with their lyrics. Audience members cheered to cocaine and dirty sex and even gluttony as the band showcased their new album *Confessions* which is a take on the seven deadly sins. Their fans seemed to take it to heart as a more than typical stream of concert-goers were escorted out, some with their girlfriends chasing after them.

Most impressively though, was the band's non-stop energy. They went full throttle the entire show. While I was starting to feel weary, they would turn it up even more and prove why so many had flocked to the Casino Ballroom.

Article By: Teresa Reilly

Photos By: Michelle Roncevic

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## Built to Spill

October 17, 2013

Bluebird Theatre, Denver, CO

Built to Spill has long been considered a staple of 90's indie rock along with bands like Pavement and Modest Mouse. Built to Spill is best known for their 1999 album *Keep It Like A Secret*, though my first exposure was through their 2007 album *You In Reverse*. Being a huge Dinosaur Jr. fan, I have always loved their obvious influence on the band and more notably Doug Martsch's guitar playing. Doug Martsch also plays in the band Halo Benders along with the founder of Beat Happening Calvin Johnson, another band I am a huge fan of.

Given their jammy nature exemplified on *Perfect From Now On* and *You In Reverse*, I was excited to see where they would go with their songs live. After bugging probably everyone around me looking for scalpers for my friend (sorry) and luckily being successful, we made our way in just in time for the opener Hazy off of their first release. The show started out very low key from the band and subsequently from the crowd response. They kept with their relatively slower songs slowly building up as the night went on.

Built to Spill came out for an encore to the first song that really had me hooked on them, the song "Goin' Against Your Mind" from *You In Reverse*. This song comes in repetitive drum and builds up to catchy overlapping guitar before coming full in with heavy Bass and Doug Martsch. Possibly my favorite song by them, I certainly was not the only one singing along with their catchy chorus.

They are also known to do a lot of covers live from different genres which shows through their eclectic nature. I was beyond excited at their choice to do The Smiths "How Soon is Now" which they absolutely killed it on. A few beers in and listening to once again the first song that ever got me into a certain band (The Smiths) was nostalgic and worth the trip out from Boulder alone. They closed with a cover of "Age of Consent" from New Order which was maybe the only song they could have cover to outdo the last. Doug Martsch is certainly a different vocalist than Morrissey or Bernard Sumner but his style really complemented both the songs.

Their last 3 songs completely made the show for me personally. The rest of the show as great and I was completely satisfied but when talking about them live, it was their great interpretation of two of my favorite songs that did it. I was maybe the most excited person in there leaving seeing as most of my favorite music is from the 80's. Even though I may have gone out to the bars after and stupidly ended up missing the last bus back to Boulder it was totally worth the whole experience.

Article By: Chris Beliveau



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## Celtic Thunder

October 1 2013

Orpheum Theater, Boston, MA

"In no better place than Boston, my sort of home from homes," said Celtic Thunder singer Ryan Kelley, "as a lifelong Celtics fan, it's always nice to get back there." That's right, the Irish crooner who leads ballads and Irish folk songs alike, is a die-hard green-teamer. "I've always been a big basketball fan back from playing at school. I can remember as far back as 1986-87, the first year I got into the NBA and the Boston Celtics. You know, Mike Burns, Robert Parrish, they ran the thing, you know? I've suffered the ups and downs. Still wear the green with pride."

Kelley and Celtic Thunder came through town just prior to the opening day of the Celtics to show Boston what their new tour Mythology is all about. The consensus is a collection of less-heard Irish folk songs but ones that speak to the guys themselves. "I truly believe this is our strongest show we've ever had on the road," explains Kelley, "as a singer who was involved with the music selection along with our musical director David Monroe. When you are a part of the selection process... it brings you closer when you're actually singing the songs."

The handsome young men from across the pond were dressed smartly and hit every mark and note right on cue. Not a small accomplishment seeing as how they are always doing something. If they aren't touring, they're recording and practicing, or perhaps working on some solo stuff (such as Kelley's new release set to come out any day now) or even cruising the Caribbean like they'll be setting sail on later today! If you happen to be one of the lucky few on the ship, make sure to wish Ryan a happy birthday as well.

He may need it. He's had a tough year and a half. "I was talking about filming the Mythology and I had left the brain injury unit probably three or four weeks prior to the show," Kelley told me, "... I think that's another reason I have an even bigger connection to this show than ever before. It was a pretty momentous occasion. My family was in the crowd and I couldn't look at them because I knew they'd be crying and then I'd be crying." As a man on the go though, he assured me he's feeling much better and is thrilled to be back out there on stage performing.

But how could anything compare to a stint at the Garden? "Talking about the highlights of the Celtic Thunder career, we've sung in the White House and the Pentagon as well, it's been amazing... but we actually sang the US National Anthem at the Boston Garden in 2009," said Kelley, "I always dreamt of standing on Boston Garden and on the court and shooting three pointers but that was as close as I got. One of those moments I'll take to the grave with me for sure."

Article and Photos By: Teresa Reilly

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## Coheed and Cambria

March 14, 2013

House of Blues, Boston, MA

On Thursday night at their sold-out House of Blues show, Coheed and Cambria brought everything their audience came for, including naked women mannequins. The energy was high for every song as crowd surfers screamed each word and fans hung over the bannisters on the third floor balcony to get just a little closer. Having a tour t-shirt from 10 years ago didn't even make you special, the real die-hards were showcasing ones much older. For most, this wasn't just another show, it was the one they'd been waiting for.

You'd know one of their songs the first time you heard it. Lead singer Claudio Sanchez has one of the most unique and identifiable voices in rock. It's a few octaves higher than most but packs a punch over the powerful guitar riffs that band is so well known for. Hits like "A Favor House Atlantic" and "Welcome Home" are perfect examples of that exceptional contrast Coheed as accomplished.

Their new album, *The Afterman: Descension*, which follows the concept album theme, carries out the band's sound and musical styling. While continuing to grow, they've stuck to their bases and provided fans with something they know they'll love. It's hard to deny when so much success has come from their previous albums.

I must say though, being a long-time fan but never had been to a show, I had a very specific idea of what Sanchez looked like. A skinny, well-shaved, slightly older guy most likely wearing glasses. Imagine my surprise when he walked out: built, tall, tattooed guy with absolutely incredible hair that only a rock star should have. Solidifying for me that this band was so much cooler than I thought they were.



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## Dropkick Murphys

[March 15, 2013](#)[TD Garden, Boston, MA](#)

I had been waiting all night for the song that represents my city. The song that indicates the Sox won and the song they play during the climax of "The Departed" and the song that blares along every victory parade, sometimes with the guys themselves on a float while the star closer does a jig alongside. As soon as those opening cords played the Garden erupted, quite literally, as more green confetti than I thought possible shot through the air for the entire duration of the song. A song I heard none of the lyrics to as the deafening sound of clapping and jumping completely consumed the space. Occasionally I heard a note break through but for the most part, it was just a cacophony of noise.

The rest of the show however had all the bag pipes, Irish step dancers and feet stomping I had been promised. You see, going to a Dropkick's show on St. Paddy's day weekend is a sort of rite of passage here in Boston. For weeks leading up to it, we all get asked a series of questions that start with "what are you doing for the holiday?" and it is typically followed up with "are you going to catch a Dropkick's show?" This year was no exception and while typically one has to fight for a ticket at the House of Blues, the band opened it up and filled the Garden with revelers. A much easier ticket than the Brighton show on Saturday or the sold-out HOB show on Sunday.

Granted the Garden doesn't have the same intimate feel as the other venues and some of the energy from the band was lost as one was standing further from the stage but during those key songs it was impossible not to dance along and feel the vibe. So as you carry out with the estimated 133 million people this holiday weekend, put on the Dropkicks at your pre-gaming event and jig away!

Article and Photos By: Teresa Reilly

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## Emblem 3

March 24, 2013

Paradise, Boston, MA

Shrilling teenage girls pushing their way to the front, annoyed dads leaning against the bar with a slight smirk and a blonde kid onstage flipping his hair - it's a scene known all too well but maybe these three Cali boys can change the mold of the American boy band. Maybe the laid-back relaxed tunes of Emblem3 with a little guitar and some hip-swaying moves will be the beginning of a whole new kind of boy band pop.

With bands like The Dirty Heads and Matisyahu growing in popularity, Emblem3 is set to grab the younger market with that surfer sound. It seems to be working already as the boys only got off the 2nd season of the US version of X-Factor in December and immediately sold-out their select few east coast shows including their Sunday night one at the Paradise in Boston. By the time the doors opened at 6, the line was full for the show that didn't start for another three hours.

The small club was engulfed with shrieks as soon as brothers Wesley and Keaton Stromberg and friend Drew Chadwick took the stage. Sporting a bandana, tank-tops and some baseball caps, they gave it everything they had, including playing their already popular "Chloe" which is slated to be their first single in the coming months. Once the first few cords started to play, their energy was trumped by the genuine pure excitement of the audience who just couldn't believe they were seeing their favorite song live. While the show only lasted a little over half-an-hour, girls linked arm-in-arm skipped out of that venue even more excited than when they walked in.

So we'll see. Can Emblem3 hold onto this rise to fame they seem to be on? Will their energetic covers of songs like "Santeria" and "Semi-Charmed Life" draw in the masses? Or will it be "Chloe" that breaks them through? To all that attended their sold-out shows though, it didn't matter, as it seemed pretty obvious we were witnessing the beginning of the next big thing.

Article and Photos By: Teresa Reilly

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## Fitz and the Tantrums

July 28, 2013

Paradise, Boston, MA

It took them a few songs to kick it up but man, when they did, they did it big. Notorious for their hip-shaking, good-time pop music, Fitz and the Tantrums know how to blow the lid off a place and they did it with force at the Paradise last night.

While still considered a band on the rise, their sold-out show in Boston on the heels of opening-up for Bruno Mars, proves that they've made an impression and word is spreading rapidly. And everyone was throwing their hands in the air, ready to take place in the party.

Oh, did I mention they have a saxophone player? They do. Onstage. If you have never had the privilege of witnessing horns live, that is reason enough to catch a show of theirs. It brings another dimension and it's inevitable that you will find the groove with that sound pumping through the air. Plus, it is one of the few instruments where it is physically visible that the player is really trying.

Considering their new album, *More Than Just A Dream*, just came out, the audience sure did know a lot of the words. They knew them all in fact. And let me take this moment to describe the crowd that night: if all bars were full of them, we would all have a more serious drinking problem than we already do. Courteous, well-dressed, sweating but didn't smell bad and most importantly happy. Everyone was just so happy in that crowded room. I suppose good music just brings them out.

Perhaps you already know their 2012 song "Money Grabber" but go ahead and YouTube "Out of My League". Alright, I'll do it for you, just look to your right. It truly is fun, catchy and happy. Live, it's just as addicting and let me tell you when singer Noelle Scaggs gets moving, you will follow suit.

Article By: Teresa Reilly



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## Frightened Rabbit

[April 2, 2013](#)[House of Blues, Boston, MA](#)

For the second time in six months, Frightened Rabbit, came back to Boston to remind us how great indie rock with a Scottish accent sounds. With the ink still drying on their first major label deal, they did not disappoint.

Screaming fans were greeted with "Holy", the third track off their new record *Pedestrian Verse*; an appropriate song for what we were about to witness. The lights were low, the audience was loud, but the band was louder.

Proving they were not only there to showcase their new record, but also to satisfy their oldest fans, they segued from "Holy" into "The Modern Leper", from their second record *The Midnight Organ Fight*. Ditching their electric guitars, Scott Hutchinson (vocals, guitar) and Gordon Skene (backing vocals, guitar) grabbed their big-bellied acoustics and provided the huge wall of open chords that Frightened Rabbit songs are known for. Billy Kennedy, swapped his bass for a Telecaster to play the leads and all three sang pitch-perfect harmonies that fans of the Lumineers or Mumford and Sons will most certainly appreciate.

The band was very willing to play with audience. They took shots of whiskey, told jokes, and played songs shouted out from the crowd. The crowd was even able to be a part of the show when Hutchinson played the opening chords of "Swim Until You Can't See Land", arguably the bands biggest hit. Hutchinson created a choir with a thousand singers belting out the root note of the song and when the band started to play, it created a sense of oneness with the audience that few bands can attain.

Selfishly, I was most excited when they played "Nothing Like You" off their third record *The Winter of Mixed Drinks*. When I first heard this song in 2010, I said to myself that if I was in a band, I want to sound like this song.

The song is very bass driven, a task that is not easy to reproduce live, and I anxiously anticipated how they would do it when I heard the opening notes. On cue, Kennedy slid his hand down the neck of his P-bass, bringing the booming bass sound with it that made me fall in love with the song in the first place. If they only played that one song, it would have been enough for me to fully enjoy the show. But they played songs from each of their four records, incorporated sounds not used in the studio, and on some songs, they dropped all the instruments, and relied on Hutchinson's strong voice and finger picked guitar.

I expect to be hearing a lot more from Frightened Rabbit in the years to come, especially now with Atlantic Records backing their music. The future appears to be very bright for these boys from across the pond.

Article By: Will Lannon



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## Gin Blossoms

January 29, 2013  
Royale, Boston, MA

As a now 25 year-old I grew up in the mid 90's listening to the Gin Blossoms' album *New Miserable Experience* on cassette tape from the back seat of my parents' car. I fell in love with the band's melodies, lyrics and unique sound. It was quite evident from the diverse demographic at the Royale in Boston that I was not alone, as an eclectic mix of 20 something year olds and their now 50 something year old parents enthusiastically greeted the 90's pop rock band with open ears.

From the moment they took the stage, the Gin Blossoms had the crowd right where they wanted us. Although their hair was shorter, their talent was nothing short of captivating. All of the bands five remaining members played with conviction, precision, and passion and lead singer Robin Wilson proved that his voice hadn't aged a day from 1992 when their first album was released. Rob immediately apprehended the crowd's attention with his unbridled enthusiasm and interactive performance which lingered throughout the night. The audience particularly enjoyed the "cheers to Boston" the band did after every song. There wasn't a moment on stage where Rob was stationary, and he never missed a note. The band even handed out tambourines to lucky first rowers to play throughout the show. By the end of the set there wasn't a hand in the first 3 rows Rob hadn't touched.

They played a 90-minute set which consisted mainly of their mid 90's hits such as "Til I Hear It From You" and "Found Out About You" and a few of their newest songs from their 2010 album "No Chocolate Cake." The fans reacted positively to their new music, but nothing could match the all-out sing along which erupted at the first cords of "Hey Jealousy" and again during the encore when Rob came back on stage, harmonica in hand, and played "Follow you down. ". The band appreciated our enthusiasm and it was apparent that they were just as excited to be there as we were. One thing I love about 90's music is the raw talent. There is no lip syncing, auto tuning, or distortion, just musicians with their instruments. Although it has been 20 years since they first broke the air waves, the Gin Blossoms looked as comfortable on stage as ever and have enough talent to keep them there for years to come.

Article By: Katy LeBlanc



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## Goo Goo Dolls

June 25, 2013

Verizon Center, NH

This should be on one of those buzzfeed articles. Did you know the Goo Goo Dolls released their first successful single "Name" nearly eighteen years ago? That's right, every time you're at a 90s dance party shouting "Slide", think about how long ago that was. And the fact that Johnny Rzeznik and the guys from Goo Goo Dolls are still out there performing is even more impressive.

Opening up for the legendary Matchbox Twenty, the Goo Goo Dolls played to a packed house at the Verizon Center last week. As soon as they took the stage it seemed to be a sea of band t-shirts dating back to the 90's as audience members of all ages screamed along.

Then "Black Balloon" happened and being a virgin to their shows, the glee I felt as black balloons cluttered the skies was genuine and remarkable. It was that teenage self that had me giggling at the purity of it.

The one song that truly caught my ear though was "Come to Me" from their new album *Magnetic*. The song was simple and classic and a little folksy. They displayed the words across the back of the stage and it was exactly the right thing to do because I had to wipe away a tear at just how sweet it was.

But while I will probably never attend a wedding again without hearing the Goo Goo Dolls in some fashion, their show lacked energy and focus. Unfortunately Rzeznik's voice is not what it was and it's rare to see a band play with so little passion. Compared to Rob Thomas and Matchbox Twenty who stormed the stage next, they were forgettable.

Article By: Teresa Reilly

Photography By: Katy Sullivan

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## Ha Ha Tonka

November 13, 2013

TT the Bears, Cambridge, MA

The guys from Ha Ha Tonka took a final swig from their beers and moseyed over to the stage. Calm, confident and making me a little worried that my plan to see an energetic folk band was foiled. But then they started to get going and my foot was stomping right along before the end of the first song.

Originally from Missouri, the band has taken their show from Boston to Texas on their album release tour that showcases their rustic sound that when pumped through some large speakers, sounds a little like rock 'n roll. That sneaky rock sound doesn't over-power the clear Americana folk however that penetrates with every Southern groan and political lyric. Plus don't forget those sweet, deep harmonies.

"Unusual Suspects" is what got me hooked. A fun, indie-sounding, clear folk song that includes a bit of power and includes a bit of that pesky rock 'n roll that keeps finding its way into their music. Then I was introduced to "Lessons" off their new album by the same name which they played early on in the show, which is a bit slower and a bit steadier but holds the heart of what their earlier album encompassed.

Ha Ha Tonka came and showed Cambridge what Southern indie-Americana is all about and there wasn't a foot left un-stomped.

Article By: Teresa Reilly



Photo credit: Frank Hill

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## Hanson

August 31, 2013

House of Blues, Boston, MA

While Hanson is world-known for their 1997 hit "MmmBop", the guys have more recently gained a reputation for putting on a high-energy, up-beat, dance-friendly and passionate show. They bring their music to life in front of you and know how to draw in the crowd. When Taylor Hanson stares you down and says, "clap your hands", you feel an overpowering urge to comply.

The evidence was on the faces of the crowd as they came pouring out of the House of Blues and onto Lansdowne Street. Smiling, giddy and a bit flustered as they continued to shake their butts to the tune still stuck in their heads. From the girl turning to her friend saying, "What was the second to last song? I need to download that one!" to the die-hards discussing Zac Hanson's new one he sang that night: "I can't believe he did a solo guitar one!"

As Hanson continues to distance themselves from the boy band genre and establish themselves as the talented rock and soul act they are, they still manage to have a zealous fan base that more resembles One Direction than Aerosmith. Braving the dirty streets outside Fenway Park, fans camped out overnight with their sleeping bags and pillows to gain a closer spot, perhaps suffering a few aches in the morning as the twenty-five plus crowd doesn't quite have the resilience they did at thirteen. In reality, most of the over-nighters are used to it as they follow the boys from stop to stop, just a few cars behind the bus at all times.

But the thing that makes each Hanson show so special, is that they know all this. They've seen the same faces in the first few rows and know that a strong part of their fan base will hit more than one show. They also know that a good portion of the audience doesn't even know they have a new album. And they know there is a section on the outskirts of the floor that could not resist the opportunity to hear "MmmBop" live. They use all that information and cater to everyone.

With eight studio albums now under their belt, they have a lot to pull from and they change it up every night. Yes, "MmmBop" will always be in there but the rest is up to the boy's whim, adding to that passionate quality of ensuring they are just as excited to play as the crowd is to be there. With a whole new onslaught of upbeat tunes from their new album *Anthem*, such as "Get the Girl Back" and "Tragic Symphony", the performance continues to favor turning the venue into one big dance party. And who doesn't want to grab a beer and have a dance party with Hanson?

Speaking of which, on top of touring the world, popping out a few more kids and doing nearly daily charity walks, the boys have also found time to begin the official release of their own beer: MmmHops. The slogan?: "From the Guys that Invented MmmBop". Now while they are still working on distributing, the word is that this beer is full of hoppy goodness that parallels the genius of the slogan.

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So when their beer finally hits the mass market, I'd find your local die-hard (there's one even closer than you think, I guarantee it) and make sure you're invited to the inevitable party they're throwing full of "Where's the Love" and "Give A Little". In the meantime, the guys will be touring until December and coming to a town near you (yes, even you German!)!

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## Jimmy Eat World

August 5, 2013

House of Blues, Boston, MA

In a wave of 90s bands making a come-back, Jimmy Eat World has jumped on and in the process, is performing to packed venues across the nation, full of fans in their mid-20s who finally can spare the dough to see their favorite high school band and passionately sing every word to "The Middle".

Best known for the pop-punk-emo style, Jimmy Eat World has been on the scene since the early 90s and has kept a steady fan base that comes back for that very specific style. With their new album *Damage*, released in June, they give their fans that same fun attitude with punk chords (and a surprising amount of alternative thrown in there that will have you going, "wow, I haven't heard a progression like that in ten years!").

With a continuation of energetic songs, it was surprising to see the lackluster crowd led by lead singer Jim Adkins. It felt difficult not to tap your feet but at the same time, the room was flat. A few die-hards could be spotted giving it their all, but it ended up being that the rest of the audience was staring at them instead of the band onstage who were void of any connection or interest of actually being onstage. The girl wildly failing her arms and screaming every word was monumentally more interesting than the middle-aged men staring blankly into the crowded room.

While I left the show actually wanting to buy the album, I felt cheated that a band with so much to give had barely shown up to play. Some bands are best left on the CD.



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## Jonas Brothers

July 22, 2013

Pavilion, Boston, MA

Together again, the Jonas Brothers stormed the Bank of America Pavilion last week to the familiar deafening screams of thousands of fans. Having each gone off to explore their own talents (Joe released a solo album, Nick starred on Broadway's *How to Succeed in Business Without Really Trying* and Kevin got married which resulted in an E! reality show *Married to Jonas*), the brothers reunited last year to start the creation of their new album *V*, set to release later this year.

It had been nearly three years since the boys last took the stage in Boston but the fans didn't miss a beat, welcoming them with open arms. They clapped and cheered and screeched their lungs out, just as their muscle memory dictated. When Nick slipped off his shirt to reveal two incredibly toned biceps, the screams heightened. When he took to the drums, showcasing what those biceps could do, they heightened more. And when he sat down at the piano to perform a ballad, the fans almost drowned him out with their undying support.

Then when the boys started out with some new songs such as "Pom Poms" which had the new music video playing in the background, their audience new every lyric and sang it just as loudly as their classics... except for "Burin' Up". That song had the entire venue unable to breathe with the fury that they passionately shouted every word, proving yet again the power of an incredibly catchy pop song.

For boy bands, resurgence is a double-edged sword. It allows them to get back out there and perform but rarely does it open the door for a renovated style. It sounds and looks like the Jonas Brothers recognize that and have embraced the music that made them who they are. If you're looking for something a bit more surprising, I'd recommend a solo album.

Article and Photos By: Teresa Reilly

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## Joy Formidable

June 20, 2013

House of Blues, Boston, MA

On a sunny Friday in April, the Joy Formidable were sitting on their tour bus, waiting to see if they would be able to go onstage that night. They were in the middle of a tour and few things would have forced them to cancel. However, like the rest of us, they were on lock-down. It was April 19th and the city of Boston was at a stand-still as the tragedy of the Boston Marathon continues its story.

But, just like the rest of us, the show must go on and they rescheduled to give their Boston fans the uplift they might have needed.

Touring in support of their January release, Wolf's Law, the Joy Formidable brought their classic show to the House of Blues. Packing the house and storming the stage, the band showed us Americans just what a Welsh band can produce.

The band has been at it since 2008 and continues to create a following that expects the most from their music. Not just musically but also lyrically. With their new one, Joy Formidable has gone a step further and truly based their sound on smart, scholarly lyrics. The kind you really have to think about but they voiced it all with a fun pop beat and performed it with an overload of lights, making for that perfect combination.

Article By: Teresa Reilly



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## Kaki King

April 24, 2013

Brighton Music Hall, Brighton, MA

Watching someone slap a guitar for over an hour is not something I thought I'd ever enjoy. Strict instrumentals usually turn me off and I have a hard time appreciating the skill. But Kaki King changed my world.

Using a variety of techniques including fret-tapping, she utilized the guitar in a way it's rarely appreciated. The instrument has so much to offer and Kaki found its intricacies.

Her music drags you in as she fills out the sound using just her hands and fingers to create percussion as well as the acoustics in a whirlwind of fast paced movement. It's haunting and happy. Before each song she gave a bit of background of where she was when she wrote it and the music transports you into that instant of Kaki sitting outside on the NYC sidewalks, perhaps enjoying a "Steamed Juicy Little Bun". It's surprising just how comprehensive the songs are despite it all coming from just one instrument.

This particular show happened to be a stop on Kaki's 10th Anniversary Tour celebrating her first album *Everybody Loves You* which she played in its entirety, throwing in a few additional tracks from future albums. The crowd seemed entranced at times while at others, they were just enjoying and swaying.

Kaki King changed my mind and made me a believer. A girl and her guitar can truly be quite powerful. Especially when that girl is a world renowned musician who has been nominated for a Golden Globe for Best Original Score.

Article By: Teresa Reilly

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## Kodaline

**October 15, 2013****Sinclair, Cambridge, MA**

Only a few short months ago, a few guys from Dublin, Ireland rolled into town supporting Airborne Toxic Event and handed me a Heineken as we sat backstage and chatted about great American singer-songwriters. As we waved goodbye, lead singer Steve Garrigan promised me they'd be back soon and this time, as their own headliners.

Mission accomplished. Steve and the guys from Kodaline sold-out the new Sinclair in Cambridge to a crowd full of Pabst-carrying fashionable twenty year-olds, some with accents of their own. They stood by as these four charming Irish men brought their alternative sound to the intimate venue and gave it all they had.

Considering the mellow vibe, the audience was more reactive than anticipated but things were kept on an even level. It was a crowd who was there to appreciate the music rather than participate but Kodaline continued to keep their own pace and impress their fans, some of whom even knew a few choruses.

In a music world full of Miley Cyrus, there is nothing more pleasant than to witness a band on the rise having music lovers care about what they're doing. To have a sold-out show in a busy town full of packed venues says a lot by its own right. Kodaline may still be climbing but they are making impressions and holding their own.

Article By: Teresa Reilly



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## Marc Broussard

April 12, 2013  
Sinclair, Cambridge, MA

After a long week, there is almost nothing better than to grab a beer at the quaint Sinclair in Cambridge. Then add in the soothing sounds of Marc Broussard and you've got yourself the perfect Friday night.

For over ten years now, Marc has been bringing his soulful sound to audiences around the world. He first caught my ear in 2004 with a calming tune called "Where You Are" from his album *Carencro* that spent the summer at the top of my playlist. Ever since then, Marc's ability to put out music that warms your heart has kept me and his unwavering fans right in his grasp.

Last Friday night they came out with friends and significant others to cuddle up to a sweet love song or sway to a more R&B tune. They sang along to hits like "Home" and cheered whole-heartedly at the conclusion of every song. Just proving that Marc brought the happiness he preaches to Cambridge that night.

Having four kids back home, he has still found time to tour and release his 2011 self-titled album. On top of that he's carried out his philanthropist work including a 2005 EP to benefit victims of Hurricane Katrina and in 2007 was involved in a tour for the troops in the Middle East.

So next time he manages to squeeze your town in his hectic schedule, make sure you clear yours. He's one act you won't want to miss.

Article By: Teresa Reilly



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## Matchbox Twenty

**March 8, 2013****Mohegan Sun, CT**

On March 8th the men of Matchbox Twenty took the stage at the Mohegan Sun Casino Arena in Uncasville CT after being virtuously absent from the music scene for almost 10 years. In September 2012 Matchbox released their first full album since *More Than You Think You Are*, which hit air waves in 2002. North immediately debuted at number one on the Billboard 200 to no surprise of their fans and Matchbox proved that their 10 year hiatus was well worth the wait. Since their first album *Yourself of Someone Like You* was released in 1996, Matchbox Twenty has produced countless hits such as "Bent", "If You're Gone" "Mad Season", "How Far We've Come", and their most recent off of North, "She's So Mean" and "Overjoyed". Throughout the past 17 years they have continuously accrued countless fans and demographics.

The set kicked off with new song "Parade" but quickly regressed a decade or two with hits such as "Disease", "3 AM", and "Real World" which transported fans back to 1996. The show peeked when Rob successfully seduced the audience with a sultry, slowed down version of "So Sad So Lonely". The band's new music was welcomed, and their lyrics were still sung with devotion and zeal. The guys were visibly very comfortable with one another and their individual presence on stage as they should be after almost 20 years of performing for sellout crowds. With a simplistic stage setup, they were able to interact with one another and the audience with ease and comfort. As tradition on this tour, Rob even confiscated a phone from a front row fan and recorded his own little 3 minute video of the band performing up close and personal. The fans were overjoyed. Pun intended.

As promised, the guys stayed on stage "until they were dragged off", entertaining the 10,000 people at Mohegan Sun with a 26 song set which lasted over 2 hours. For those 120 minutes, no one was able to take their eyes off lead singer Rob Thomas as he effortlessly performed a rapid compilation of songs from the band's 5 albums and a David Bowie cover of "Changes" without missing a note or lyric. His emotion and enthusiasm for his music is overwhelming and contagious and his immense passion, flawless vocals, and on stage charisma kept fans mesmerized.

In typical fashion, the band "ended where we began" closing out the show and a four song encore with a sing along to their very first number one hit, "Push".

Article By: Katy LeBlanc



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## MGMT

December 5, 2013

The Orpheum Theater, Boston, MA

MGMT wants you to be on drugs. They want you to feel a little trippy and a bit out of sorts. Of course, really what they want is for you to feel their vibe and jam with them. So when they throw in a jam session in the middle of their set, they're going to do it the right way.

They're going to throw a bunch of jelly-fish on a big screen that turn colors. Then maybe there's a hopping camel. And when things really get funky, hit the strobe lights and all of your senses will mesh together making you a little dizzy but ultimately relaxed because your senses are just on overload and they've given up. Your body will have let go and you'll be floating through the ocean with the pink jellyfish. Or maybe you're just contact-high. It's hard to tell but just go with it.

Their whole show is surprisingly good that way. Of course you're excited to hear "Kids" and along with the entire audience, you may cheer your heart out at those first few well-known cords. However, you'll find yourself grooving to the music in a way you may not have before. And the key to why people pay so much to see a live show is that they experience the music they love in a different way from just an audio track. It depends on the band or artist as to what that means exactly but for MGMT, it was the ambience they brought to life that set the stage for their fans to hear their music the way they see it.

If you're a fan, their show is a can't miss and if you're a casual listener, get in the mood, do a little pre-gaming and get ready for a trip.

Article and Photos By: Teresa Reilly



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February 5, 2013  
TD Garden, Boston, MA

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## One Direction

June 26, 2013

Comcast Center, Mansfield, MA

Hot night, hot ticket: fans flocked to Mansfield's Comcast Center on June 26 for this summer's or, more likely, this decade's most talked about touring act. Who could it be, other than the cheeky British/Irish lads of One Direction?

Even before Niall, Liam, Louis, Zayn, or Harry appeared on stage, the audience had well begun to scream, shriek, and squeal over the five heartthrobs. Audience response? Not something these boys ever have to worry about. 1D jogged out to center stage and were immediately welcomed by a vibrating, ear-piercing mass of hysterics, shaking Mansfield enough to make a dent in the Richter scale.

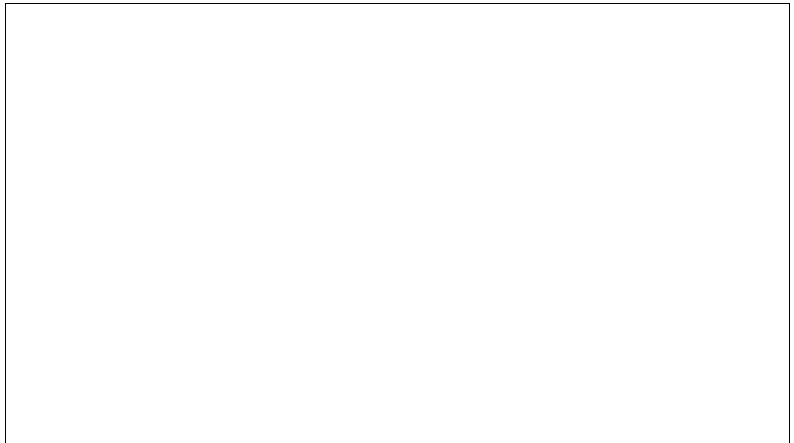
Girls from every corner of New England rocked out to the pop beat "Kiss You," waved their arms to the more intimate "Little Things," and sang at the top of their lungs to "What Makes You Beautiful," One Direction's very first single.

It's been a whirlwind journey since the boys placed third on The X Factor UK in 2010: since then, they've dominated the charts with two massively successful albums, the second of which, *Take Me Home*, provides the basis for their international tour this year. Though it doesn't appear the fame has gone to any of their heads. In interviews, onstage, and on Twitter, they're constantly thanking fans for their unwavering support of the band and they sure feed off of the attention.

Throughout the concert, the boys reached into the first few rows and hijacked iPhones of a few lucky fans to film the venue from their perspective and take a few shameless selfies. They posed for pictures when they could see fans waving around cameras, and they pointed out the funniest fanmade posters in the audience. The crowd erupted whenever the boys would do so much as touch one another.

In retrospect, the 1D show was everything one would expect from a typical boyband thousands of sweaty teenage girls, predictable setlist (although they performed an impressive cover of "Teenage Dirtbag," devoted fans like myself walked in already expecting it). But what made the concert so special and what makes One Direction atypical is the fact that the lads could have performed the same exact show to a group of middle-aged men and still have proven their pop sensation status: their infectious charisma, their nonstop energy, and their refreshingly pure talent validate their newfound and sure to be long lasting world fame.

Article and Photos By: Maddie O'Connell



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## P!NK

March 28, 2013

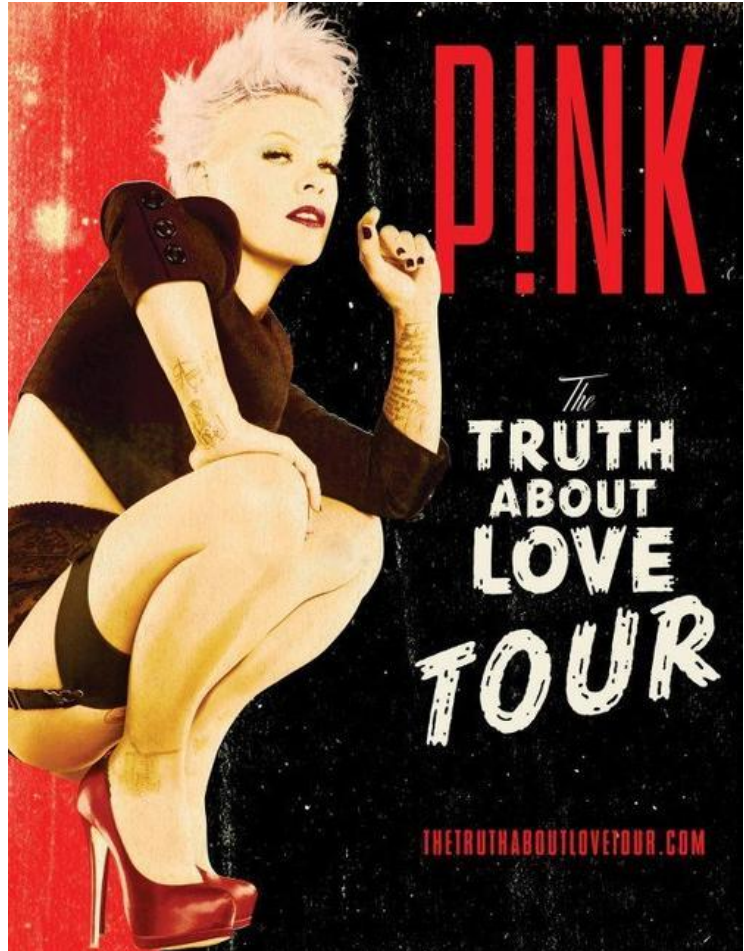
TD Garden, Boston, MA

Great performance, spectacular acrobatics, and a star connecting with the crowd on a personal level were the main elements of Pink's "The Truth About Love" show at the TD Garden in Boston.

The singer and her crew delivered an outstanding show including fast and slower dance performances, great instrumental features and seven outfit changes by Pink. The show had a special character leading through it which transmitted the feeling of a circus arena supported by many acrobatics. Most impressive was that Pink's vocals never suffered under her many different acrobatic acts during the show. The highlight here was definitely the encore when Pink went flying over the crowd on the floor, across the TD Garden. She was strapped in a special construction with four strings attached to every corner of the room. It gave people in the high bleacher seats the opportunity to see the star up close.

Pink also took her fans into consideration when performing the radio version of "Funkin' Perfect" because of the younger audience. The rock star is a mother at the same time which she shared with the audience at different points during the comments and a personal video at the end. She also played a video with pictures of her childhood and the beginning of her career before performing "Most Girls"/"There You Go"/"You Make Me Sick" making it even more personal. During the show the singer spontaneously took some time to collect presents, talk to her the fans and singed some autographs. All of this was positively acknowledge by the crowd.

Article By: Melissa Steiger



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## Rebelution

May 3, 2013

Lupo's, Providence, RI

Rebelution came to Lupo's Heartbreak Hotel in Providence, RI and opening was for them was J Boog. J Boog is an R&B and reggae singer who grew up in Compton, CA. His interest in music began developing when he was a young boy and he was strongly influenced by the music of Bob Marley. As he got older and further developed his musical talent, he collaborated with another artist, and together they moved to Hawaii to refine J Boog's sound. Now, J Boog and his band have a reggae sound that is an unmistakable mix of Hawaiian and Jamaican influences. They played with great eerie energy and their sound definitely takes you away to the islands, making you forget that you're stuck in the shithole that is Lupo's.

As I was waiting for Rebelution to come out and perform next, it was clear that many other Rebelution fans were as pumped as I was, but they definitely came to the show much more prepared. I have never been at an indoor venue where an array of people scattered around the pit area can freely spark blunts and toké away with security not even giving a glance in their direction. I may have missed the memo previously about the leniency of Lupo's "security" in regards to blazing up at shows, but I definitely got it now!

One thing I really like about seeing Rebelution is that, before they come out, they don't spend time having music play to amp the crowd up - they come out ready to play and don't make their fans beg for it as they are already anxiously awaiting their performance. What's best about this is that Rebelution truly doesn't need this type of filler because the band and the fans both almost instantaneously make a connection and exude a paralleled energy as soon as the band takes the stage and begin to play. The band was fantastic, as usual, and they played for a long time! They played a variety of their songs, mostly those from their newest album but also several from their previous albums. I can't remember from last year if their saxophonist is the same guy or a new member, but he was incredible! He had a couple solos where he really showcased his talent and it was amazing to watch and hear him play. One highlight of the show was the solo duel between the saxophonist and the guitarist - it was something wicked awesome to see and hear! The lighting that Rebelution used for their show was great too - everything ties in well to the music and nothing is distracting or obnoxious - very complementary and adds to the overall performance of the show. All in all, it was another all-around fantastic show - each member played flawlessly, vocals were on pitch, and they demonstrated the integrity of their musicianship.

Article By: Michelle Roncevic



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## Taylor Swift

[July 27, 2013](#)[Gillette Stadium, Foxboro, MA](#)

For the second night in a row, over 67,000 people packed into Gillette Stadium to witness the beauty and power of one of the most famous artists of the decade. Taylor Swift took the stage to deafening applause as girls, mothers, teenagers and friends cheered her on with every chord.

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## The Dirty Heads

July 2, 2013

House of Blues, Boston, MA

The Dirty Heads get better with every show and their fan-base is ready to support it. Beginning as just a few long haired guys opening up for Sublime, they have quickly swept up followers along the way, ending up at the House of Blues in Boston to a packed house last week.

Touring on their new album Cabin By the Sea, the band brought more of what their great at: chill music. It's that laid-back vibe mixed with strong percussion and a solid back beat that gives their music the flow that has everyone nodding their head and swaying their hips. It, of course, also condones throwing back a few beers and singing as loud as you can which lead singer "Dirty J" Watson acknowledged with a nod to the heavy drinkers on a Tuesday night. And with new songs like "Dance All Night", how could you not?

As they belted out songs like "Lay Me Down", "Stand Tall" and "Spread Too Thin", the crowd seemed in unison to the front-to-back bop that was happening even as crowd surfers barreled over them. There in turn comes the skill of Watson and guitarist Dustin Bushnell because it was still tough to peel your eyes away from the stage where the movement more leading that anything and constantly passionate. Plus Jay was playing to our hearts by wearing a tank top with a big Red Sox "B" on it.

Not letting their successful moment die, The Dirty Heads announced that once this tour wraps up, they're gearing for yet another one, this time with a different spin. They're going to do it acoustic. While I worry it may steal some of their live pop, they have yet to disappoint so I know I'll be keeping an eye out for those tour dates. You better too, if the size of the crowd was any indication, these guys are only getting bigger.

Article and Photos By: Teresa Reilly

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## The Dirty Heads

February 23, 2013

Lupos, Providence, RI

The Dirty Heads stopped at Lupo's in Providence on their Odyssey tour, co-headlining with Shiny Toy Guns. Shiny Toy Guns were playing when my friend and I arrived at the venue. I was there to see The Dirty Heads, as I am a big fan of them, and have never heard of Shiny Toy Guns, but I came to see that this band has a electronic-rock sound with a female lead vocalist. She sounded alright during the short moments that I could actually hear her voice. This type of hipster-emo band is not of a genre that I can say I really enjoy, so my review of them is, admittedly, biased. But to give them the benefit of the doubt I sure hope they sound better on their albums than they do live. I could barely make out vocals other than some screaming and occasional whining. There was so much fog from the fog machine that I couldn't be sure of how many people were actually a part of this band and that was pretty much all there was to look at on stage – fog, darkness with some flashing lights, and the occasional view of a person or people.

I was not sure what to make of the crowd when I first arrived at the venue. Typically when I go to see The Dirty Heads the crowd is generally a mosaic of different types of people around my age (mid 20s). However, here I felt like I was at a show with a bunch of high-school students - possibly middle-schoolers due to the abundance of drunken parents who seemed to be there as the "responsible" chaperones. All in all through it seemed that the majority of the crowd seemed to be enjoying listening to Shiny Toy Guns and having a blast, so I'll leave this bit with "to each his own!"

Finally The Dirty Heads came out. They released their second album Cabin by the Sea in June of 2012 and this album reflects a more refined reggae sound than their first album, which was a bit more of a harder rock-hip-hop fusion sound with several rock-reggae tracks. Though I do like their new album and more refined sound, tracks from their first album, Any Port in the Storm, entice my interest more and are dear to my heart. They began their set by playing tracks from their first album which was great not only because they are some of my favorites but these songs (with their hard bass and fluid rhythm) also served to amp-up the crowd. They then played some tracks off their newest album and then switched back to some older songs. The songs that comprised their set list was very well done in that they were some of their most engrossing tracks and made for great show. I was afraid that their sound would change and lose some of its energy based on the refined, more laid-back sound from their newest album; however that was not the case and I had a great time – as always at a Dirty Heads show.

Article By: Michelle Roncevic



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## The Green

November 10, 2013

The Paradise, Boston, MA

Reggae band The Green came to Boston and played at Paradise Rock Club this November. Worth taking note of is one of their opening bands, another reggae band called The Movement. The Movement played a great show with lots of energy and really amped up the crowd before The Green came onstage. Their reggae style is rather interesting as it is a fused with rock and alternative sounds – think a mix of reggae, Sublime, and The Pixies.

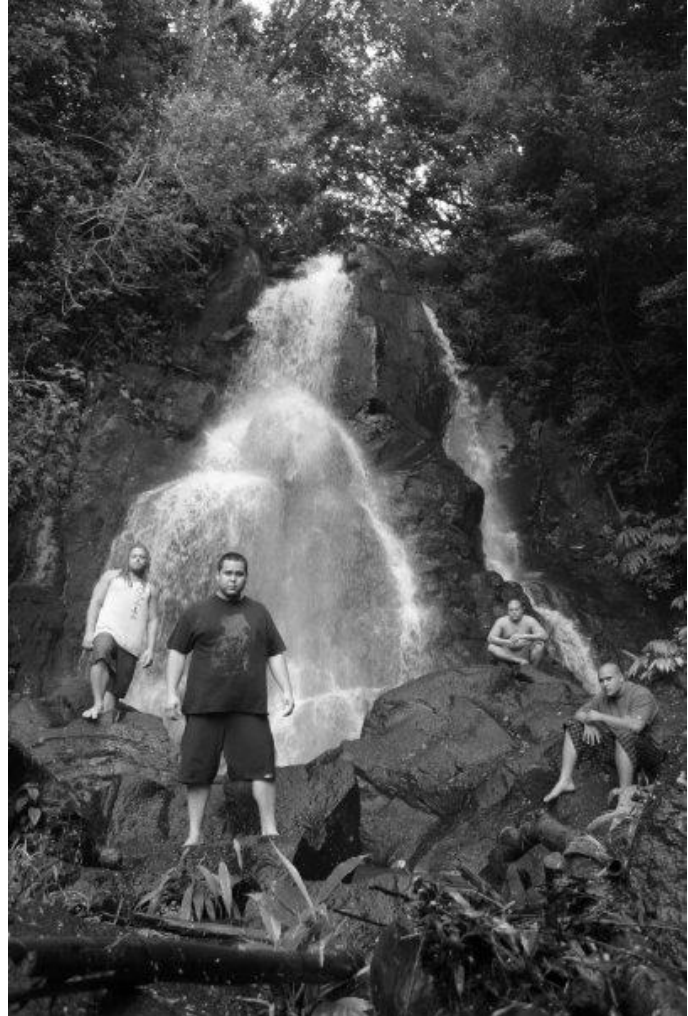
The drummer had the majority of my attention as he was talented and a fantastic performer. He exhibited a level of body coordination that was absolutely stunning. He played with great rhythm for the reggae aspect of their sound and he then took it up several notches and played with incredible speed for some of their more rock-sounding songs. How he was moving his body as he was playing was mesmerizing because of the level of control he demonstrated to have over his entire body and just overall coordination.

The Green is a larger group with six members in the band. There are four vocalists, two of which also play guitar and another plays keys. Their bass player also plays keys. All members of The Green are from Hawaii and their music reflects life in Hawaii through sounds of roots reggae, R&B, and some soul. The songs that comprised their set were a nice mix of the sounds of music that they play and reflected a fine-tuned flexibility in their musicality.

All of the members shared in the spotlight, with the exception of their bass player/keyboardist who seemed to be just tucked in the back. Just as you think that he may just be the type of person that avoids the spotlight, he is called out by the main lead singer to be recognized for his talents. He came out doing a bass solo that had the entire venue cheering for him. He is a smaller dude and his bass guitar was enormous so part of the wow-factor was watching him dominate this instrument with ease.

The Green ended their set with the crowd chanting for them and then they came out saying that they were informed they had more time to play, and that's what they did for an additional 15-20 minutes. Overall they played with great energy and demonstrated their talents through the variety and flexibility of their musical sound.

Article By: Michelle Roncevic



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## The Saint Johns

November 22, 2013

The Sinclair, Cambridge, MA

Some sets start off slow and stay that way but The Saint Johns brought the crowd down a relaxing river raft ride then resulted in fun and high-energy rapids.

The Tennessee duo stepped out onto the stage at the Sinclair a bit unceremoniously and played a slow, almost background-esque song. They then introduced themselves and forewarned that their material may be a bit depressing and lead-singer Jordan Meredith even made a snide remark to the audience that resulted in a bit of an uncomfortable room. It didn't seem like they were going to be able to make for it as the room began to get more and more crowded.

Then, they picked it up a bit. Louis Johnson, the other half of the duo, made a few hilarious jokes about Nashville. They told a cute story about how they are absolutely not dating even though, yes, they are male and female singer-songwriter team. They complimented the headliner, Stephen Kellogg, and the room turned. It warmed right up to them. Their on-point harmonies were finally being noticed and what I originally found to be distracting arm movements by Jordan, I then found to be a nice supplement to the overall show.

Mostly folksy love songs but I didn't have to know they were from the south to hear the country twang that lives in their music. The Saint Johns have a mellow sound that carries enough edge to it that makes it different and stand-out. You aren't just listening to another sleepy tune that a hundred bands have made, you're listening to something a little different. When they kick it up, they really kick it up and the audience found themselves clapping along.

Give them a listen and rest assured that they are just as lovable in person (eventually).

Article By: Teresa Reilly




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## Under the Sun

August 4, 2013  
Newport, RI

The Under the Sun tour came to the Newport Yachting Center in RI this summer and it was a trip back into the 90s. My 13-year-old self was ecstatic and I was particularly excited to see Smash Mouth, since Fush Yu Mang was the first CD I ever owned. Other bands in the lineup were Gin Blossoms and Sugar Ray. Fastball and Vertical Horizon were also along on the tour as guest performances, and Fastball was the band that played at this event.

Fastball opened the show and though I was not familiar with the band, I did recognize some of the songs they played, however I cannot recall what they were as the priority at that time was to get a beer. While on the subject, this venue had an above average selection of beer and, unlike everything else in Newport, the prices were very reasonable. I never would have guessed that two beers would be less expensive than street parking.

My friend and I got our beers and found our seats in time to see Mark McGrath as the MC introduce the Gin Blossoms. When they first came out all I could think of was "holy crap they are old now!" But their age aside, they played very well and definitely brought the 90s back to life. The lead singer was all over the stage with the mic and his tambourine getting the crowd to make noise and clap along. At one point he ran into the crowd, stood up on an empty chair and was singing to the crowd, slapping hands, and giving hugs to fans. They played a lot of their hit songs that you instantly recognized like Hey Jealousy, Found Out About You, and Follow You Down.

Sugar Ray was next and Mark McGrath is hilarious! He really likes to talk and joke around with the crowd as well as fellow band members. He was taking song requests for their second song and someone called out one of their hits from the early 00s and he was surprised that the crowd wanted to throw it back so early on in their set. Of course they played the request and followed it up with a few other of their hits. They did cover a rock song and did a very good job – I almost want them to change up their genre!

Smash Mouth finally came out and their set was fantastic! They were all very entertaining and I was so glad that they played songs mostly of their rock and ska style rather than of their pop sound. The drummer was really good and he had a short solo. The guy that plays the keyboard and does the programming is crazy onstage! He was jumping and flailing all around and he was also doing crazy jumps where he kicked his feet up to about the height of his head. At the end of their set, the crowd wanted an encore but it unfortunately never came. Overall though this was a really great show! The bands played what the crowd wanted to hear, which reflected a sense of nostalgia for the 90s.

Article By: Michelle Ronscevic



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## The Warped Tour

[July 11, 2013](#)[Comcast Center, Mansfield, MA](#)

For the past eighteen years (that's right, I said eighteen years), the Warped Tour has brought bands like Blink 182 and D12 to the masses in this rolling festival that parks in large open spaces and lets teenagers run wild. It brings bands from around the world in a mess of a day's worth of shows and throws a party for the youth of the surrounding area. But has this iconic event gotten less cool?

Having attended Warped Tour every year for the past ten years (that's right, I said ten years), each year it becomes more and more obvious that it's shrinking. With no hard numbers in front of me, it was clear there that this year must have dropped attendance by at least a third. Parents got in free and it seemed that passes and extra tickets were abound. The crowds at each stage were significantly smaller and my desire to punch a 16 year-old was shockingly less.

I also never understood the lack of posting the set times. With big name bands playing early and in such scattered places, it seems most would be more inclined to purchase a ticket if they were able to have some structure to their day. Or perhaps if they knew they could make it in time for their favorite band after work. It seems it would also cut down on the wandering that so many look like lost zombies just shuffling from stage to stage.

This year's big band was 3OH3!: a poppy punk band that belongs on that main stage, exuding their energy to the masses. Aside from them and maybe Allstar Weekend though, the band list was a bit unimpressive. However, the point is to catch something new and discover a band that breaks the mold or makes you want to steal their new single.

While I hope the tour will continue to come without fail every summer, I do hope they make an effort to bring the festival back to its original glory. Because there is nothing cooler than seeing dirt bikes fly across your view as you're trying to watch a show.

Article and Photos By: Teresa Reilly

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## Wiz Khalifa

[August 7, 2013](#)[Comcast Center, Mansfield, MA](#)

When I read a rumor online that Wiz spends \$10,000 a month on weed, I thought it couldn't be true. How can someone even spend that much money on anything in a month? And no one loves smoking *that* much. What a ridiculous rumor. But mid-show he broke it down, sat on the corner of the stage and starting singing what appeared to be a love song, couples grabbed one another, and then the chorus hit: "everything's better when you're high". His love songs are about smoking. This, of course, was followed by a song with two special guests: a lighter and rolled papers.

Having hit the big time only last year with "Black and Yellow", Wiz has become one of the most well-known artists in the rap game. With seemingly non-stop collaborations with artists like Snoop Dogg, Kid Cudi, Akon and most recently Kelly Rowland, his influence is being spread across the map as rap music is beginning to take its turn in mainstream being spearheaded by artists like Wiz, Jay-Z and Daft Punk. And the youth of America is eating it up even more than I imagined.

With Khalifa being 25 years-old himself, I expected the bulk of the audience to be his age (and stoned out of their minds of course). As it turns out, the high-school/college-aged audience is who actually almost sold-out the massive Comcast Center. With tube tops and high heels, teenage girls flirted with teenage boys in the concession line and they didn't know all the words but they definitely knew every swear that was to be sung.

There were a lot of swears and a lot of gangster related comments I couldn't relate to but I threw my hands up and couldn't help but nod my head to nearly every hit. He just kept on playing hits like "Word Hard Play Hard", "Paperbond" and "On My Level". The crowd felt and played off his energy as his set list was rare in that it was based on the flow of the music rather than making sure every radio single was played together in mass at the end like most musician try to do. It made for a continuous harmony of beats of that was only interrupted by the costume changes, which were unnecessary but entertaining none-the-less.

I left Wiz's show feeling happy, a bit second-hand high, sexier and little more gangster: the perfect combination for a Wednesday night.

Article and Photos By: Teresa Reilly

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## ZZ Ward

[October 2nd, 2013](#)[Paradise, Boston, MA](#)

If you're looking for something fierce with a bit of rock and a lot of soul, ZZ Ward is your ticket. She'll show you what a young girl from rural PA can do to with a funky backbeat and a killer voice; the kind of voice that has just enough edge but a lot of depth and pulls off a blues melody with softness.

She took the stage earlier this month to a packed house at the Paradise which is no small accomplishment seeing as how she just hit the scene last year with her debut album *Til the Casket Drops*. If you're into teenage mysteries, you may already be humming the words to this as her second single by the same name became the commercial song for ABC Family's *"Pretty Little Liars"*. Fits, right?

If you haven't heard it already, look it up, and then follow it up with "Put the Gun Down". You'll get the vibe and then let me go ahead and recommend the entire album because it will make you feel happy and sad and like you want to dance but also like you want to relax in a big comfy chair in a way that only the blues performed by a passionate young woman can. You'll hear about break-ups and love lost but also about competition and independence. Trust me, it'll be an experience you enjoy.

Then, if ZZ comes to your town, catch her soon because her live stuff is even better. That passion you can here on the album comes out in full force on the stage. She'll make you feel it. And she's about to be huge so catch her in your local club before you're stuck in a way too big venue, way too far away.

Article and Photos By: Teresa Reilly



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