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July 11, 2010

Comcast Center, Mansfield, MA

There's that movie/song/TV show that even though you've seen/heard it a dozen times, you still find something new every time you watch/listen to it. Even though you've been enchanted every time, somehow, something wonderful escapes your senses.

I've seen 311 four times now and I truly thought I had an excellent handle on their live show: absolutely packed with energy, enthusiastic fan involvement and a fantastic lighting guy. Each show has been memorable. The men of 311 are pros at the live performance which is demonstrated by the throngs who continue to fill the amphitheaters year after year.

The band has become infamous for their live shows and even though a good chunk of the audience hasn't put in their Don't Tread on Me CD in 6 months, they show up in mass quantities with their faces painted and beers in hand. It's worth showing up just for the party atmosphere and positive audience energy.

Once again, 311 didn't let me down. They played a well-mastered set list and, despite creeping into their forties, jumped about the stage like most thirty-year olds wish they could. Watching this is when I noticed the thing that had escaped me all three times before: leader singer Nick Hexum is hot. I regret that somehow this very important fact had slipped past me. Since mentioning this to a variety of female 311 fans I've come to realize that I was alone in my ignorance but I'm thrilled that somehow a great thing has become even greater.

Now that I've annoyed half of you but hopefully intrigued the other half be sure to check out 311 tour dates in your area.

Article By: Teresa Reilly

Pictures By: Teresa Reilly & Michelle Roncevic

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Bryan Greenberg

December 4, 2010

Cafe 939, Boston, MA

Up on the third floor of a Berklee building on Boylston St., Bryan Greenberg doodles a music note on the whiteboard while explaining how he can't actually read music. "I mean, I know how to play every cord. I know the cords, I just can't read music," he says, "I learned from my friend who taught me punk rock music. Just basic power cords and then I got a Beatles book and I learned all those songs. That's sort of how I learned how to write songs. Then when I was at college at NYU I took a couple of guitar classes just to refine my skills a little bit but I'm pretty rough."

Perhaps better known as Ben Epstein from HBO's new "How to Make It in America", Greenberg has found time in-between filming two movies (Friends With Benefits starring Justin Timberlake and Mila Kunis as well as The Normals, an indie film due to hit the festival circuit shortly) to record his sophomore album We Don't Have Forever due out January 18th. His first single, "Walk Away", has already become a fan favorite.

"I was playing the show last night and people were already singing along," said Greenberg referring to his packed Highline Ballroom gig in New York but Saturday night's show at Boston's 939 Café proved the song's strength yet again as sure enough, the audience sang right along throwing their hands in the air. With a full band, Greenberg put on a genuine rock show complete with a remarkable harmonica solo by musician Yonatan Elkayam. The band's enjoyment was contagious and Greenberg pulled the audience in with a surprisingly confident stage presence full of witty and charming quips.

A trained actor, Greenberg had a way of singing with facial expressions that embodied the story in his lyrics. Of course it doesn't hurt that they are in fact his lyrics.

"Sometimes I'll have a previous poem written of mine. I'm always writing lyrics and stuff, and I'll just apply it to a cool riff I have. Sometimes I'll just come up with a cool hook and I'll write around that. Sometimes I'll just wake-up and have a song ready to go," said Greenberg on his writing process, "It kind of hits me when it hits me." But it isn't always his story. Inspiration can come from any aspect of life. For an actor, it may even come from the characters they portray.

"My life is only so interesting," admitted Greenberg, "the characters I play have a lot more interesting lives. It's very dramatic. People want to watch their stories play out in television and movies. I do find inspiration from the characters and the worlds that I'm in." On his new record Greenberg branched out even further and stepped into uncharted territory.

"I ended up writing with Graham (Colton) and Michael Tolcher," said Greenberg, "I used to think writing a song was very personal. It was my personal expression, especially coming from the acting world where I've always been given my lines and given direction. You're supposed to fit into the world that they're trying to create and that's great and that's my part but with music it was mine and nobody could tell me it was wrong and I'm not trying to do the label thing, I'm just doing it because I love it. So I took a lot of pride in writing my own songs but I was stuck on a lot of songs. When I went on tour with these guys I learned that they all write all the time with other



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can only get you so far but... people aren't singing your songs just because you're an actor."

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Regardless of how they know him, they showed up and participated for the over-an-hour set. But before Greenberg trotted off-stage he proclaimed to his audience that he'll be back! After finishing up this tour, going on a safari in Tanzania, and filming Season 2 of "How to Make It in America" of course.

Interview and Photography By: Teresa Reilly

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Cheap Trick January 30, 2010 - HOB Boston

For music fans, you know you're in the right place when the band lists off the other famous musicians in the crowd that night and their faces happen to line the halls of the Rock n Roll Hall of Fame. Saturday night at the House of Blues – Boston, Cheap Trick had a list of the best. When members of the Eagles and Aerosmith show up, you know you're in for a musical treat. But that wasn't the only hint.

Cheap Trick hit it big in the US in 1977 with their album *In Color* which included the infamous "I Want You to Want Me". Throughout the next 30 years, this punk rock band put out undeniable hit songs ("Surrender", "Dream Police", "The Flame", just to name a few) that have generations singing along. This is where my second hint came in: as much as I was surrounded by middle-aged moms and dads, I looked up and saw a group of fifteen year-old boys hanging over the second-floor railings. Then on my way to the bar I was elbowed by three girls in their mid-twenties who were rushing to the front of the stage to catch a glimpse of the still great looking long blonde-haired Robin Zander. And it wasn't easy to fight through this sell-out crowd. Any band that can bring multiple generations together has something special.

Certainly the majority of their fan base was in the mid-life crowd but these aren't people who just stopped in for a good show and some drinks. Cheap Trick fans, as I found out very quickly, are absolute die-hards. They've been to thirty, forty, even fifty plus shows thanks to the bands continuous touring. This is the third hint: any band that can carry fans through three decades is a must see. Even more so, any band that can make those soccer moms come out from hiding and show up in their low-cut best shirts must have a lead singer who can still rock it.

The truth is the entire band can. Having seen Bun E. Carlos recently in his role as drummer for the super-group Tinted Windows (which includes members of Hanson, Smashing Pumpkins and Fountains of Wayne), I know he still had it but Rick Nielsen had the energy of a man performing his true passion. These men have been doing it for a long time, and they're good at it.

An hour and a half later, all my hints had come together to create an unforgettable memory. "I Want You to Want Me" has taken on a whole new meaning.

Article and Photos By: Teresa Reilly

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Citizen Cope

February 25, 2010
Paradise, Boston

In a small dark club at the edge of Boston, Citizen Cope played to a sold out crowd all weekend. His voice filled the room perfectly as the audience stood in appreciation one minute and couldn't stop moving their feet the next. They watched, and then sang along to the soulful-funky tunes of this DC native.

"But what you've done here/is put yourself between a Bullet and a Target" they shouted in perfect unison. Cope had them in his grasp and didn't let go for the entire hour and a half set where he played songs off his entire catalog including the new one The Rainwater LP. Everyone seemed to be in the mood as it poured for the fourth day in a row in Boston. Yes, a group of girls behind me even lit up.

Cope had a stage presence about him that even while the music was slow; all eyes gravitated towards his mic, guitar and piercing eyes. With over fifteen years in the industry, it's no surprise he has created not only a great show but also a loyal following. Plus, his music finding its way onto various episodes of "Entourage" probably doesn't hurt the fan base either.

Whether you were the mid-forties couple in the front row, the celebrating 21 year-old or the couple making out over the second floor banister, I saw you smiling and swaying. You had a blast and enjoyed an excellent musical experience – we all did.

Articles and Photos by: [Teresa Reilly](#)



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Earthfest

May 22, 2010

Hatchshell, Boston, MA

"I'm sipping on some sunshine". Even though I'm not entirely sure of the meaning of this Crash King hit single, it seemed to fit into the theme of this year's Earthfest which boasted a 75 degree day on the banks of the Charles River. The Hatchshell was rightfully busting at the seams as audience members took advantage of this free show on an absolutely perfect day.

Due to the excessive amounts of traffic in the area my Earthfest experience didn't kick off until the Crash Kings hit the stage with their catchy new song "Mountain Man" which seems to be on 92.9, the show's sponsor, every hour. Granted it isn't easy to get a free audience too excited about the music but the Crash Kings did a good job of it. With a good looking singer and an even better looking bassist it was a shame that the barricades weren't closer to the stage but the crowd didn't seem to mind as they enjoyed a well performed rock show.

Then the line-up changed from hot newcomers to 90's classics as Gin Blossoms took the stage. They quickly got their claim-to-fame song "Hey Jealousy" out of the way but fans who stuck around got a special treat as lead singer Biff Leen closed that stage-to-audience gap by climbing up on the front row barricade and hanging over his adoring audience. They seemed pleased as the chant of "Thank you Biff" followed him as he strolled back to the stage. He had a good portion of the crowd on their feet and the band seemed to have a decent following despite not having a new album in almost four years.

In keeping with the 90s theme, Collective Soul closed out the day and brought the ever moving audience to a standstill as people stopped and listened to this world-famous rock band. With incredible long hair and a genuine rock sound, they captivated a sun burnt crowd that earlier, seemed to have very little patience. Teenage boys began climbing trees and day long blanket-layers stood up to get the full experience of a solid rock show.

Attending a day long free show in the direct sun can be exhausting but I was pleasantly surprised at how many bore it through to the end. There is no doubt that we all can agree it was completely worth it.

Article and Photos by: Teresa Reilly

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Flogging Molly February 27, 2010 - HOB Boston Craic agus Ceol

There is one thing I know for sure – the Irish know how to throw an amazing party. That's exactly what Flogging Molly did in a packed House of Blues in Boston; they enforced a ton of craic. I've rarely seen the place buzz as much as it did before the main act took stage but fans seemed to be on the ready for what was about to happen. Once David King and clan started they never let up.

Not to use the word leprechaun but the small Dublin-born lead singer certainly constantly bopped across the stage absolutely exploding with energy. It was contagious. The audience kept up and fans of all ages bounced to the infectious tunes.

In fine Irish/Pogues fashion, an array of Guinness glasses littered not only the stage but every surface around the bar. Small girls screamed their lungs out to "Cause we find ourselves in the same old mess/ Singin' drunken lullabies" alongside a sea of Red Sox hats and Celtics jerseys.

As the last few crowd-surfers crashed over the barricades and the bartender turned down the hazy-eyed man who was literally soaking wet, Flogging Molly went out as they had come in, with an absolute bang. They delivered and set-up Boston perfectly for some Paddy's day enthusiasm.

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Foreigner

June 20, 2010

Bank of America Pavilion, Boston, MA

When discussing my plans for last Sunday night I received a mix bag of reactions:

"I have no idea who that is."

"What do they sing again?"

"Are you serious? They still play music?"

"Why would you ever go see them?"

"'I Want to Know What Love Is' was my favorite college drinking song! Do you have an extra ticket?"

"'Cold as Ice' is still on my playlist, I love that band!"

"Oh! They play that song, 'Feels Like the First Time'! I'm so jealous!"

For my generation, Foreigner tends to be the band we forget we love. I've never been at a party where if "I Want to Know What Love Is" comes on, there isn't a massive instant sing-along. Somehow we all know the words and the song lends itself perfectly to the heartfelt crooning of many. To be honest, I had to look-up Foreigner songs before I took on the assignment but as I was scrolling down the list of their top hits, my smile just grew bigger and bigger. You would think I was kidding if I were to tell you my twenty year-old brother drove around two summers ago listening exclusively to "Cold as Ice" but it's the truth. Foreigner's songs have successfully bridged the generation gap.

While talking to a fellow concertgoer, she made the comment that "maybe so many kids are here because it's Father's Day?" It's certainly a possibility but the idea that father and son chose a rock 'n roll show by a band from the 70's to enjoy the holiday speaks to the group's ageless appeal.

I certainly wasn't entirely sure what to expect but spending a gorgeous summer night on the Boston waterfront at the Pavilion sipping on a giant Budweiser turned out to be pretty decent. Did I scream at the top of my lungs to "Hot Blooded"? I sure did. Was I insanely impressed with the show lead singer Kelly Hansen put on, despite being 49 years-old? Absolutely! It was all the makings of a phenomenal night and the band pulled it off. Turns out a Foreigner show is just an old-fashioned good time.

Article and Photos By: Teresa Reilly



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Goo Goo Dolls

An Interview

In the late 90's a romantic rock ballad stole the charts as the Goo Goo Dolls officially made their way into pop culture. Sixteen more Top 10 singles followed and after a short break they are back with their new album *Something for the Rest of Us*.

After two years of touring (and "a year to be a little bit human," says bass guitarist Robby Takac during a phone interview Tuesday) the band decided to hunker down in their new Buffalo recording studio. "The first three records that we recorded when we were a punk rock band we did up there," explains Takac, "so we decided that when we were coming back to Buffalo to work that we'd rebuild the place."

After building and recording they had an album worth releasing, still in the tone fans have come to love but perhaps with a bit more openness to it. "I don't think it's so much political as it is a little bit more obviously political just due to the times," said Takac, "John's had a tendency to speak in metaphors... So people sort of jump to conclusions thinking that perhaps things are about relationships about a man and a woman as opposed to some sort of other relationship. I think it's a little bit more obvious these days that these problems exist so I think people have been able to fit it into the equation a little bit easier." Now back on tour, the band continues to solidify ways to communicate with fans. "I think that if you keep people engaged ... involved and... up-to-date, that's what they're looking for," says Takac, "they want to know what's going on and they want to know that they have a place to come that's valid and reliable."

Whatever they're doing it appears to be working as their shows around the country continue to fill-up. Tomorrow's show at URI's Ryan Center is sure to be no exception but don't forget your canned goods. "...bring nonperishable food goods to the show. Canned soup, beans, whatever. Drop it in the bins at the front and our street team (you can check them out on facebook and myspace, they're awesome) they coordinate efforts with every city for a food pantry or a shelter and we get food right into the hands of people who need it. No money exchanges hands at all which awesome so no one can be creepy about it."

Article and Interview By: Teresa Reilly



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HANSON

July 24, 2010

South Shore Music Circus, Cohasset,
MA

Do you like fun? Do you enjoy catchy melodic music that is irresistibly butt-shakable? Go download 'Give A Little' from Hanson's new album Shout It Out then buy a ticket to their closest show. Get an extra one for a friend and bring your dancing shoes. Here, I'll help: <http://www.hanson.net/site/sections/22>.

Got it? You're in for the show of the year.

A short two months ago Hanson released Shout It Out, a pop album in the best sense of the word and after only one listen my reaction was: "I need to see this one live".

It isn't very often you find a band that has thirteen years of experience with the entire group still being in their twenties. It makes for a high-energy show and a front-man most bands dream of. Taylor Hanson pulled even the most cynical to their feet. He knows every "get up and clap" trick in the book and has the good looks to pull it off.

Hanson blew it out of the water and pulled songs out of their thirteen-year catalogue of albums. That's correct - "MmmBop" was thirteen years ago. And yes, they have aged even better than your ten year-old self could have possibly hoped for. Moreover, that catalogue contains five studio albums, each one even better than the last. In conclusion, the two-hour set wasn't nearly long enough.

Zac Hanson played a powerful rendition of "Oh Darling" then followed up in the encore with my brother's favorite 1997 Hanson song "Man From Milwaukee" (with the megaphone part).

They packed a heap of great music into the South Shore Music Tent though and did it all while spinning. I wasn't sure how I felt about seeing a show "in the round" at first but it turns out all it means is that the worst view you get all night is their shaking butts. Plus it's like getting every seat in your row without moving.

Basically, if you like great pop music and dancing, spend the night at the Hanson show. I promise you won't forget it.

Article and Photos By: Teresa Reilly




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Backstage with the Honor Society

May 2, 2010 - HOB Boston

When the drummer of a band can't stop smiling as he looks out on stage, you know you've found a band that really enjoys the music they make together and being able to share that music with their fans. On May 2nd at the House of Blues, Boston, that drummer was Alex Noyes. The band? Honor Society.

From the band's sound check (which they shared with fan club members), to their live show with Just Kait and Ashlyne Huff, the band had a synergy that definitely kept their fans screaming. The band played songs from their debut album, Fashionably Late, including Nobody Has to Know and See U in the Dark. Paying tribute to some of the bands that inspire them, lead singer Mike Bruno and keyboardist Jason Rosen put together an acoustic medley featuring songs by Lady Gaga, Jason Derulo, Lady Antebellum, Kings of Leon, and more.

I had a chance to meet up with the guys of Honor Society before they hit the stage, and must say I was pleasantly surprised by the group's easy-going attitude. They may have only had a few minutes to spare, but they were more than happy to pull up a chair (or table) for a quick chat.

For those of you who are unfamiliar with Honor Society, you may have seen them as openers for performers including The Jonas Brothers and Timbaland. On the last leg of their third headlining tour—Here Comes Trouble—they look back on all of their performances with excitement. "We like both angles of it because when you're opening you're getting exposure to a new fan base; when you're headlining it's your show so you have complete creative control," says Bruno.

In fact, all of you current fan club members can thank their summer tour with The Jonas Brothers for being able to meet and talk to the band during sound check. "[The Jonas Brothers] had been doing sound check parties so we saw that and ran with it," Noyes says.

"For the last two headlining tours we've had fans come in...they get to hear a couple songs and we take question and answers. It's a fun time for both us because we get to engage the fans in a more one-on-one, intimate level and them because they get to see what a real sound check is like—they get a peek behind the curtain."

While Honor Society has been together for almost three years, Bruno, Rosen, and bassist Andy Lee started playing music together in high school. Fans that lined up outside before the show wanted to know what each member's first impressions of each other were. Here's what Jason Rosen had to say:

Jason: "Me and Mike met in high school, in art class, so I guess I was like 'Oh he's a good painter...' We just started talking about music right away and had that common ground of bands we grew up listening to."

"I think [Andy] just came over to my house and we were in my basement [and we started playing music together]."

"We had Alex come out to a rehearsal space in New York City to audition as our drummer and I was like 'Look at this rag-tag kid.'"

As both the newest and youngest member of the band, Alex Noyes supplied one of the most memorable first impressions for the band. Here's his story:

Alex: "I had brought my entire drum set in my car that day [to the audition]. I didn't know that the place we were rehearsing supplies the drum set."

"I'm talking to Andy and I'm like 'I'm almost there, I've got my full drum set.' And he's like 'Why do you have that?' and I say 'I don't know...cause...sorry.'"

"I didn't really know what to think coming into the audition, but after playing with them through a couple tunes it was very clear that they were very awesome musicians and it was something I wanted to be a part of."

Keep a look-out for a second album coming in the future. While they didn't want to give away too many secrets about what they're working on now, Lee says, "We've got some plans brewing. We are hard at work...We'll see what happens, we've got some surprises for you."

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Jarrod Gorbel

November 20, 2010

Oakdale Theater, Wallingford, CT

Being the opening act is rarely easy. "There've been shows where I just felt like nobody gave a shit," said Jarrod Gorbel, former lead singer for the Honorary Title who just released his first fully solo album entitled Ten Years Older but just finished up a tour opening for Hanson, "but then, I'll speak to people at the end of the show and realize that a lot of people were into it. And because Hanson has these hardcore fans that go to these repeated shows I'm given the chance to grow on people too I feel like."

Perhaps being brutally honest (mostly about himself) Gorbel chatted with us behind the curtains at the Oakdale Theater in Wallingford, CT. Since nearing the end of the short month-long tour, Gorbel was beginning to grasp the oddities of playing for a slightly obsessive and somewhat difficult crowd. "I'm finally learning how to play to their audience because... it's tough because you got Hanson; their fans are so devoted which isn't a bad thing but it's like, they see right through you, I feel like," said Gorbel, "they're like 'when's Hanson going on'. And plus, I'm just a duo and it's folksy and mellow. Even Hanson on the mellow side has like three part harmonies and its full drums and it's very big sounding and pop."

Unfortunately Grobel was right, to no fault of his own. Particularly with Hanson's new loud and upbeat album Shout It Out, the audience wasn't ready for an acoustic opener that featured just Gorbel and a violin player. A few heads were swaying but the air in the venue seemed to be more filled with anxious anticipation which didn't match the mellow sound Gorbel was performing.

"He's actually pretty good," said Hanson fan and concert-goer Haleigh Stanway, "but I just can't get into it right now".

Similar whisperings seemed to float about the crowd. Nothing negative was being said about the artist himself and there was actually a very positive reaction to violin player Dre who performed on the album and Gorbel picked up to be his other half during the tour. "I just ran into her at a show in LA (she's based in California, I live in Brooklyn but I'm always in LA)... and I was like 'hey, how's it going, I haven't seen you since I did the album.' I was like, 'would you consider touring?'" because I knew I was going to start touring very stripped down, either solo or as a duo," said Gorbel, "then she came to mind when I had tours lined up and I just called her and she's like 'ok'".

The combo made for a perfect musical pairing that will hopefully stretch into Gorbel's proposed spring tour. "I don't know what I'm going to do yet. It might be another string player, or violin players. Like something mellow that's more than a duo."

One thing in Gorbel's future that seems to be for sure is that his Honorary Title days are over. "When I did the solo album it was just kind of a decision to be like 'this is the next level or way of displaying the next round of songs that I've written'. I've matured, I've grown, and I'd like to do something different than the last Honorary Title record. I wasn't crazy about the direction

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Mike Posner

[October 11, 2010](#)[House of Blues, Boston, MA](#)

Mike Posner probably thinks that he's cooler than me. He probably is but I definitely shouldn't know that he thinks that. The lyrics from his debut single "Cooler Than Me" plays him as the endearing, modest man who is fed up with people who walk around with their noses in the air. Which is why I was so surprised last Monday night at the House of Blues when his on-stage persona appeared to be exactly everything he claims to hate.

To begin with, he had at least five opening acts. The line-up had me scratching my head as an array of genres took the stage: a white MC, a pop punk band, a band reminiscent of the early eighties, a boy band made up of men in their thirties and the Far East Movement who have the #1 song on I-tunes "Like a G6". While they were all talented, they didn't flow seamlessly into Mike Posner or each other like perhaps a better chosen singular opening band should.

When eventually Mike Posner took the stage, I was first impressed by his incredible voice, the energy of the crowd and the melody of the music but was then quickly disappointed after only a few songs because he simply stopped the music and stood in front of his audience. Unfortunately, it wasn't for a brief interlude between songs but rather seemed to be a full four minutes in itself. It just became awkward after awhile when the crowd stopped cheering and there was only him standing on-stage thinking he was Justin Timberlake.

To add to the awkward set, this didn't happen just once. This happened throughout the night as Mike Posner would stop performing and would simply stand there in front of a crowd that he was supposed to be impressing.

"You got designer shades/just to hide your face and/you wear them around like your cooler than me" became ironic as Mike Posner kept on his shades throughout most of the set and "you got your hot crowd/shoes on your feet/and you wear them around like they ain't shit" simply enforced that perhaps he had lost that adorable modesty that had made him famous.

The show proved to be an odd disappointment. For such a talented individual, it should have been an easy win over the Boston crowd but most left unimpressed. Our recommendation is to buy the CD or perhaps a few songs off of I-tunes but to definitely skip the live show as you will likely leave feeling a bit disgusted.

Article By: Teresa Reilly
Photography By: Jacqueline DeRosa

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One Republic

July 8, 2010

House of Blues, Boston, MA

Upon walking into the House of Blues in Boston last week for the OneRepublic show I was pessimistic about what I'd find. I was sick and tired of their Top 40 hit "Stop and Stare" and the fact that a bunch of out of town cars was very poorly parallel parked out front didn't instill my confidence in fellow concert-goers.

This cynicism was further enhanced by plenty of middle-aged audience members but there were no lines at the bars. I was again puzzled when these same thirty year-olds were taking "myspace pictures", making sure to get the opening band in the background.

But then the band took the stage.

Pessimism quickly turned to excitement as I began to realize that OneRepublic is legitimately musically talented. They've managed to incorporate a five-piece band and a cello into their ensemble which gave every song a layered and melodic nature. Lead singer Ryan Tedder has the perfect voice for specifically this band. Every song seemed to compliment every element of the band.

I certainly don't mean to imply the music is something to fall asleep to because the majority of it was exactly the opposite. Energetic songs backed by electrifying entertainers brought the venue to life. With hands in the air, everybody was rockin' to hits like "All the Right Moves".

OneRepublic surprised me but in such a great way that I bought their November-released album *Waking Up* the next morning. I haven't been able to turn it off since. Check out their new single "Secrets" especially.

Article By: Teresa Reilly

Editor's Note: Due to unfortunate technical difficulties, the images taken from the show have been lost.



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Pepper

October 09, 2010
House of Blues, Boston

Over the past week I've been struggling with how to explain Pepper's music. It's sort of reggae/ska and tends to lean towards material hip-hop lovers may like but then can turn into rock 'n roll with heavy electric guitar. Going to the show Saturday night at the House of Blues in Boston I thought would help clear this up for me.

At first, I thought it had. The audience was made up of mostly young guys drinking Bud Light and there was definitely a relaxed air in the room. The opener, Brother Ali, was an inspired MC with a focus on love and peace who had the audience engrossed. They loved him. This was clearly a ska show.

Then the lights went down, the crowd went crazy and the three guys from Pepper took the stage (dressed as doctors to match their new album Stitches). After only the first few chords, kids were already crowd surfing and head banging. Head banging? Maybe this was a rock show. But there was so much upbeat bass, could it be both?

As the show carried on, I changed my mind a dozen times but soon realized that I appeared to be the only one even thinking about it because the audience was absolutely absorbed in the show. In the same way, the band appeared to be captivated by their fans and were even kind enough to remove their shirts.

After a fifteen minute encore the crowd seemed to linger in satisfaction proving the pop/reggae/rock/ska/hip-hop/punk band had given loyal fans the night they had come for.

Article By: Teresa Reilly

Photography By: Teresa Reilly and Michelle Ronscevic



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Rooney

July 24, 2010

South Shore Music Circus, Cohasset,
MA

Being the opener to a band with a cult following has got to be nerve-wracking. There were few people I spoke with outside the South Shore Music Tent that had seen Hanson any less than five times; most were well beyond their twentieth show. The audience was gathered to see one thing and Rooney happened to be standing in the way.

The lights dimmed and the band rushed down the aisles to the spinning set in the center of the venue. The audience sat, ready to criticize.

Turns out, this wasn't exactly the first time Rooney has been under the opener spotlight. After taking on the role for everyone from Weezer to the Jonas Brothers, the band simply started rocking, completely undisturbed by impatient fans.

Then, as the stage continued to spin, the audience started a little seat dancing. I heard a girl behind me turn to her friend and say, "you know what? The lead singer is actually pretty cute. He looks familiar," to which her friend replied, "yeah, he played the brother in the Princess Diaries, the one that gets with Anne Hathaway in the end". This somehow changed everything and these girls might have started the trend that caused various small packs of girls to get up and actually enjoy themselves.

While Rooney didn't break down the entire crowd, they certainly created a few new fans that night. This includes myself as "Can't Get Enough" off of their new album Eureka is currently on my playlist.

Plus they were kind enough to greet their new found fans by their merchandise booth. As I was slipping by I witnessed lead singer Robert Schwartzman holding up a young girl's new Rooney t-shirt to which he explained, "This will make you awesome".

Article and Photos By: Teresa Reilly

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Saw Doctors

May 15, 2010

House of Blues, Boston, MA

Do you miss Ireland? Do you long for those rolling green hills or shockingly high cliffs? Do you miss the taste of a freshly poured Guinness or a warm tea on those drizzly mornings? What about the N17 highway that winds through Galway? A sold-out crowd at the House of Blues in Boston seemed to as they screamed "And I wish I was on the N17/Stone walls and the grass is green". It was the first time I had ever seen an audience shout about a highway so passionately.

A band since 1986, the Saw Doctors have been drumming up enthusiasm for Ireland's lesser known treasures by writing some good old rock 'n roll songs. In 1996 they drew attention to a small rocky island off the coast of Mayo, already famous as being home to Grace O'Malley (Pirate Queen). The band paints a romantic picture of Clare Island that seemed to be bringing couples even closer together all across the crowded venue.

In a moment it seemed we all longed for the "Green and Red of Mayo" or perhaps reminisced of those miserable windy cold weeks when we all thought "Will It Ever Stop Raining"? The Saw Doctors took us on a rollercoaster of emotion where we were fondly remembering first loves and the tragic importance of missing an open football goal. For a wildly drunk crowd, this was quite the experience.

While people walking down the streets of Boston may have been asking, "who are the Saw Doctors?" the crowd had memorized nearly every song in the band's two dozen years of music. With witty lyrics, mixed in with some classic rock 'n roll sound and a touch of Irish traditional tempo, the Saw Doctors still haven't made the mark in their US like they have in Ireland but a sold-out show at the House of Blues is no small feat, proving that their fan base is loyal and enthusiastic to see these boys from Galway. If you're looking for a night packed with a wide range of feelings, the Saw Doctors may be able to help you out.

Article By: Teresa Reilly



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Stephen Kellogg and the

Sixers

October 14, 2010
Royale, Boston, MA

If you aren't entertained by the music from Stephen Kellogg and the Sixers then you'll have a smile on your face from the witty side stories he sprinkles throughout his performances. Stephen's charm alone has become reason enough to catch his live show. Just watch this video below that is a prime example of what makes a SK6ers show great.

Only a few short years ago I was lucky enough to be introduced to this band when they were an unknown opening act. They were performing only a few miles away from their alma mater so the crowd was enthusiastic and even knew a few tunes. Last Thursday night at the gorgeous Royale in Boston however, the audience was bopping and shaking to songs they knew every word to.

Somehow Stephen appeared younger and had gained the stage presence of a true front man. He had the audience singing and dancing along after only the third tune. With a charming tip of his hat after every song, the young lady behind me was literally squealing.

They filled in a few spaces quoting hilarious movie and telling personal embarrassing stories. They even did a little bit of dancing. The show became more than just the music even though that was above par as well. SK6ers put on an all around excellent show that I can't wait to see again.

Article and Photography By: Teresa Reilly



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Sublime with August 19, Rome Pavilion, Boston, MA

When I say "Santaria", what pops into your head? How about "April 29, 1992"? We all think of the same thing.

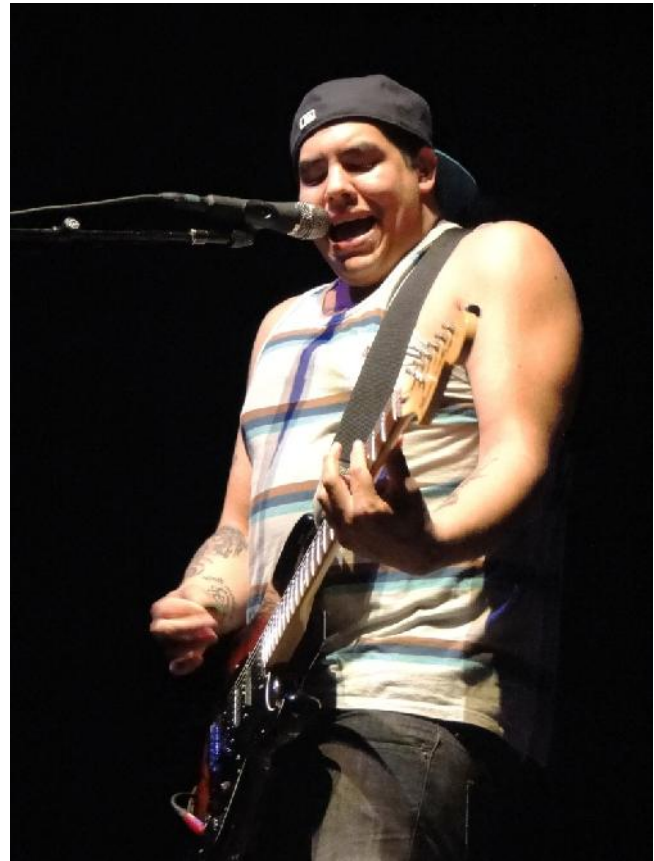
These songs are a part of American pop culture and on August 19th, two-thirds of the original Sublime played to a sold-out Bank of America Pavilion.

It took a testy legal battle with original members Bud Gaugh (drums) and Eric Wilson (bass) but they were eventually allowed to set out on tour with their new twenty-two year-old friend Rome but with the stipulation that they legally go as "Sublime with Rome". The name may have worked even better than originally thought as Rome's song "Lay Me Down" with opening act, The Dirty Heads, stayed at No. 1 on the Alternative Songs chart for more than ten weeks this summer.

With a smoke cloud hanging under the tent, they brought back 40 Oz. To Freedom and Sublime. Song after song the audience, made of up of all ages, belted every word right back at the young California born Rome Ramirez who was attempting to fill big shoes. He didn't miss a beat and had a voice and rhythm remarkably similar to the late Bradley Newell.

It was great seeing the young man's dream come true and it didn't seem to make much difference to the laid back crowd who were the envy of the town. On a gorgeous night in South Boston, Sublime with Rome did the classics justice.


Article and Photos By: Teresa Reilly



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Warped Tour

[July 13, 2010, Comcast Center, Mansfield,](#)[MA](#)

When I was in high school, the highlight of my summer was always the Warped Tour. What an incredible idea it was. I got to slosh around in the often muddy dirt and push my way through crowds and crowds of people to hear good music and get free stuff. It was impossible to make it through without bruises all over – on your knees, shins and even head. There was that overall sense of freedom and rebellion.

Now it's that next generation's turn. With surprisingly similar fashion and the exact same interest in unnecessary free stuff, these kids were pulling at my heart strings as waves of them crowd-surfed on top my head.

I managed to do only a short stint this year but got to the stages just in time for the All American Rejects to bring the mass crowds to the small stage deep in the Comcast Center's parking lots. Being the first performance I was witnessing that night, I didn't realize that there was a shockingly large amount of people crammed into the little space between stages and vendors. As it turns out however, the All American Rejects are not cool to like. There is no way these kids don't know "Gives You Hell" but out of the hundreds surrounding the stage, only a select few belted it out. I saw plenty of guys turn to their friends and roll their eyes but yet they stayed and perhaps snuck in some foot tapping. Regardless of any poor audience reaction, lead-singer Tyson Ritter still killed it. He brought the energy that caused some cynical teenagers to accidentally shake their butts.

The most fun aspect of The Warped Tour is rarely staying at one stage for an entire set. That being said, I did catch a few glimpses of unimpressive performances by Alkaline Trio and Motion City Soundtrack. From overhearing a few conversations, it sounds like they have the loyal fan base but perhaps, are having some trouble momentum wise.

Even though I was only able to stay for a few songs during Reel Big Fish, they surprised me. With a lot of the pop emo punk seeming to always control the Tour, Reel Big Fish was a refreshing revelation. They were wearing happy colors and sang some happy tunes. Most importantly, they had horns. Nothing makes a happy song happier and adds more punch than a horn section.

I then ran across the muddy ground to attempt to capture Sum 41. I couldn't believe what I saw when I got there. People had nearly filled the seated section at the Comcast Center, where even the aisles were full. Completely shocked I elbowed my way down to the front and into the press pit only to still be surrounded by barricade, colleagues and at least 20 giant men in yellow. As soon as the band took the stage, chaos erupted. Crowd-surfers came flying into my head in only second-intervals, to the point that those giant yellow men were falling on me in an attempt to catch them all.

I escaped up to some higher ground but hung around simply to watch the m  l  e. It turns out Sum 41 is very cool to like and for good reason. They have a catchy catalogue of songs that they've impressively built up over the past ten or so years. "In Too Deep" "Motivation" and "Fat Lip" still make it onto radio rotation and remain a fun surprise while your iPod is on shuffle.

After that slightly terrifying experience, I was nervous to go see the next act on my list. I had seen the album cover and wasn't sure what to expect. However, when I finally got to the Andrew W.K. stage I was pleasantly surprised as it was the opposite of the Sum 41 experience. It turned out to be a moderately calm crowd who all seemed to be patiently waiting for music they know and enjoy. When the man himself stepped out, they cheered and just looked out to the music, and did neither throw their bodies across the audience nor kill each other just to get a little bit closer. Perhaps my favorite performance of the night, Andrew W.K. is a showman with genuinely impressive musical skills. He plays rock-out music and does it well.

From The All American Rejects to Andrew W.K., The Warped Tour did it again and left thousands of teenagers satisfied.

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