

Jack's Mannequin visits the House of Blues

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The tickets at the House of Blues downtown were sold out as excited fans packed tightly inside to see Jack's Mannequin and their hand-picked opening bands: Allen Stone and Jukebox the Ghost. The venue is right next to the Chicago River and Marina City, making the walk there from the train station on the evening of January 25th a very enjoyable one. The interior of the House of Blues is heavily decorated, with walls lined with a variety of things ranging from examples of their merchandise to band posters. There are stairs that you have to walk up to get to the main floor of the stage where there is a bar and standing room. Balcony seats are also an option, some of which offer a view from the extreme right of left of the stage so you can see behind the stage.

As soon as the first opener Allen Stone and his band walked onstage, there was an instant vibe radiating from them. It was clear that they were all happy to be there, and this was accentuated by the enormous smiles on their faces while playing. They played their soul music with an enormous amount of passion, and Allen Stone's voice fit the genre extremely well. They covered a song by Bob Marley near the end of their set, and ended their short set with one of their own songs, all filing off the stage to heavy applause as they cleared out their equipment to get ready for the next band.

Jukebox the Ghost was the second band to go on. A three member band consisting of guitarist Tommy Siegel, drummer Jesse Kristin, and keyboardist Ben Thornewill, Jukebox the Ghost produced a full sound that was very upbeat and original. They played a set of alluring, exciting songs including two songs



off of their upcoming album that will be out later this year, and even traded out their usual cover of "I Love You (Always Forever)" by Donna Lewis for a cover of The Beatles' song "Golden Slumbers." They set up and set down quickly and efficiently, making the most of their time on stage. Both Jukebox the Ghost and Allen Stone and his band were at their merchandise booths after the show, meeting and greeting their old, and new, fans.

Jack's Mannequin was the third and final band to go on. They decorated their stage

with lamps and an old, well worn, brown baby grand piano. It gave the stage a very personal feel to it, as if the audience were standing in their living room with them. They played songs evenly from all three of their albums, a few of which were acoustic versions.

The lead singer/pianist of the band, Andy McMahon, was still full of energy even from two nights in a row onstage in the same venue, and stood on top of the piano a few times, playing notes by stomping on the keys and showing his appreciation for the people

who came out to see them. At one point the band walked off the stage, leaving everyone yelling for more music, only to come back on while announcing that, "we planned to come back, don't worry!" They ended the concert with their most popular song "Dark Blue," and shot confetti into the audience.

The concert ended around 10 pm, leaving the large audience of students enough time to get back to their homes or dorm rooms to work on their homework, probably while listening to one, two, or all three of the bands.

