

Jukebox the Ghost's week in Chicago

By Kori Bowns
BUSINESS MANAGER

Few bands deliver such an electric, upbeat, and quirky performance as Jukebox the Ghost, who made two appearances in Chicago last week. Jukebox the Ghost, known for their cheery and daringly optimistic piano pop melodies, held a question and answer session and acoustic set at the Apple Store on North Michigan Avenue last Monday and performed as an opening act at The House of Blues Chicago on Friday evening, to the delight of their fans of all ages.

Made up of pianist/vocalist Ben Thornewill, guitarist/vocalist Tommy Siegel, and percussionist Jesse Kristin, Jukebox has released three albums since their formation in 2003. After releasing their third album, *Safe Travels*, this past June, Jukebox has just finished their headlining tour and is now

touring with Now, Now, opening for Motion City Soundtrack's USA tour.

At their Apple Store appearance, fans got to see a more personal side of the band as a representative from The A.V. Club interviewed them before opening the floor to questions from the audience. The band talked about their musical inspirations, what they would be doing if they weren't musicians, their band history, and their personal music preferences. Jukebox's members got to show off their sense of humor when asked what their favorite iOS app was, to which Jesse slyly replied, "Google Maps," with a quiet smile.

After the modest crowd in the upper level of the Apple Store was drained of questions, the band played a small acoustic set consisting of two of their more mellow songs, "The Spiritual," and, "Don't Let Me Fall Behind," in addition to one of the singles

released off their newest album, "Oh, Emily." Despite fans' disappointment with the length of time Jukebox had to play, the band stayed late to sign posters that were given out for free and to get to know everyone who desired to meet them. Overall, the small gathering that took place on Michigan was a great opportunity for hardcore followers and new fans of the band alike to get to see a different side of Jukebox in a low-key setting.

Later that week, fans of Now, Now, Jukebox the Ghost, and Motion City Soundtrack flocked to the sold-out floor of The House of Blues in anticipation. Now, Now opened up the show with their brand of trancy electronic rock. After their half-hour set, Jukebox took the stage. Opening with, "Everybody Knows," a hit off of *Safe Travels*, Ben, Tommy, and Jesse transformed the show from a slow listening party to an excited

whirlwind of energy, leaving even those who had never heard of Jukebox dancing to the beat. Jukebox the Ghost breezed through their set, playing their most popular tunes and even throwing in a hastily-done cover of Whitney Houston's, "I Wanna Dance With Somebody," before their last song when they learned they only had five minutes left on stage. Jukebox closed their set with the number one hit off their second album, "Schizophrenia." If the amount of cheering and applause the band received is any indication, Jukebox certainly gained many new fans during their set.

Jukebox left the stage having sufficiently warmed up the crowd for Motion City. Jukebox's many veteran and new fans rejoiced when the band announced before leaving the stage that they will be returning to Chicago in February to headline a new tour.



Images courtesy of npr.org and popdose.com