

4/7/2009

THE DAILY ORANGE

Letter to the editor: Ben Folds, Guster not obscure choices for Block Party

OK, OK, we get it. You're not happy about the Block Party acts. But can we stop the editorials that blatantly bash University Union's hard work on the show?

I'm not a member of UU, and I never will be, but the fact remains that they never purposely put on a bad concert. In fact, I think this year's Block Party lineup is - GASP! - good. But apparently, The Daily Orange feels differently.

So, I have to ask you: have any of you ever booked a concert? It's HARD. I've booked shows myself, albeit on a much smaller scale, and I can say without reservation that there's a lot to juggle. Not only are there always money issues, but on top of that, one must deal with the venue, artist routing, and the public at large. Haphazard editorials only make the process harder.

The Editorial Board wrote in an earlier piece that Guster "is on the brink of obscurity." That is just plain wrong. The band has shared the stage with John Mayer, O.A.R, and The Dave Matthews Band. They've also appeared on The Tonight Show, Conan O'Brien, and David Letterman. I don't know your qualifications for deeming someone obscure, but I would be hard pressed to call Guster's resume lacking in name recognition.

As for Ben Folds, he too is a known performer and one who has a proven track record entertaining college audiences. Not to mention, some of today's biggest acts in music point to him as an influence. He puts on a fun show, and will engage the audience.

Are Guster and Ben Folds my favorite bands? No. Are they the most popular acts out there today? No. Are there acts that would have made me more excited? Well, probably, yes. But the fact remains, I'm not admonishing them based on the fact that they don't rhyme words over loud drums and synth.

You seem to constantly point to the fact that the Block Party lineup should be diverse. This couldn't be farther from the truth. Do you remember the concerts when the acts were all diverse? They were weird. At least with a cohesive show, the audience is engaged the whole time, as opposed to a show with various acts that leaves part of the crowd uninterested for an

hour at a time. Two similar acts make a much better environment to see a show.

The D.O. also states that there's a lot of demand for a hip-hop act on campus. Truthfully, I haven't heard of any of this demand except when you seem to bring it up in opinion pieces about how Block Party should have a hip-hop act. And on that note, have you ever been to hip-hop concert besides Jay-Z or Kanye West? With the exception of those two artists, hip-hop live shows are normally a little disappointing. As for the T-Pain concert in Schine, of course he'll sell-out quicker...it's because there are one-fourth the number of seats as Block Party! It's simple math, not necessarily a matter of popularity.

Mark Zito
Host, The Mark Zito Show
Junior, College of Visual and Performing Arts