

The Salt Lake Tribune

Concert review: Jack Johnson

by: David Burger



Trib staffer Chris McDonald attended Jack Johnson's Friday night show at Usana Amphitheatre, and here is his review:

Laid back, chill, mellow. Did I miss any?

All of these and more have been used to describe Jack Johnson and his music.

As much as I wanted to avoid using these cliches, they fit.

Johnson's show at a packed Usana Amphitheatre was like going to a party with friends and family, a really large party. With the exception of a large screen behind the band, the stage was simple and provided as intimate an atmosphere as

Usana allows. Johnson's shows are devoid of pyrotechnics or elaborate props and are all the better for it.

The show opened with "You and Your Heart" from his new album "To the Sea" and for nearly two hours Johnson had the audience in the palm of his hands. There were a few twists on old favorites including a verse from "Just What I Needed" by The Cars that found its way into Johnson's "Sitting Waiting Wishing".

Hawaiian singer Paula Fuga joined Johnson on stage for "Turn Your Love", the pair also performed Fuga's song "Country Road." Dan Lebowitz, guitarist for opening act ALO, and G Love, who performed an energetic solo set, contributed to a rousing rendition of "Staple It Together" including a freestyle rap from bassist Merlo Podlewski.

Johnson's keyboardist Zach Gill, who is also a member of ALO, lent his accordion skills to the songs "Banana Pancakes" and provided a playful stage presence throughout.

Johnson's easygoing persona was on full display during the song "Do You Remember," as he forgot what verse he was on and shared a good laugh with the audience. For the final song of the evening Johnson was joined onstage by Fuga, G Love, and Lebowitz, for his uplifting tune "Better Together," a fitting song to end a party with "family and friends."

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