

[Forecastle Fest 2014](#)



By [Angela Ash](#)

Photo Credit: [Tim Ash](#)

Forecastle Fest 2014, held on Louisville's beautiful Waterfront, is something that everyone should experience... at least once a year. Throw your ideas of the regular music festival out of the window, because this is one of the most unique, creative weekends of live music that you will ever experience. And the food isn't too bad, either.

Forecastle is a genius, in brilliant disguise as a musical gathering, with plenty of fantastic local food and drink, imaginative art, quirky little memento and curiosity table fronts, empowering eco-informative booths, and a comradery amongst its fans that is not likely to be found again during this century in a crowd this massive. In short, Forecastle completely rocks, without knocking over the person next to you or spilling your moonshine. (Oh yes... there IS moonshine.)

Day One sails out of the gate with a plethora of talent, some with a massive following already waiting by the stage for hours, and others who will win over new fans with their onstage presence and musical prowess.

Forecastle is all about possibilities. The Mast Stage offers up Benjamin Booker, JJ Grey & Mofro, Gary Clarke Jr., Twenty One Pilots, and Outkast.



JJ Grey & Mofro

The Boom Stage boasts the Black Lips, Against Me!, Local Natives, and Spoon.

Performing on the Ocean Stage are Public, Mimosa, St. Lucia, and Nightmares On Wax (Live).

The WFPK Port Stage dazzles the crowd with Old Baby, Foy Vance, Willie Watson, the Districts, and Leagues.

Many people filing into the festival first hear the opening strains from Benjamin Booker and must think... "Just how quickly can I get to the stage to see this guy?" This New Orleans singer-songwriter has amazing charisma, and you can physically see the crowd drawing in... literally

stepping closer to the stage to get a better look.... to immerse themselves as deeply as possible into the electric vibe of his guitar. When Booker performs "Violent Shiver", it is obvious that he has kicked off Forecastle in an impressive way.



Benjamin Booker

Followed up on the same stage by JJ Grey & Mofro, attendees step up off of their carefully arranged blankets to move to melodies that dare you to even attempt to do otherwise. With six albums under their belt, they seem to be completely in-tune with the crowd, tossing out each song in an effortless fashion that makes them even more appealing and sincere. However, the lyrics really seem to hit home, as many people mouth the

words or scream them at the top of their lungs, meeting each line with an obvious passion for its meaning.□

Of course, the Mast Stage culminates in Outkast and a ferocious, fun-loving crowd that reacts with energetic appraisal to hits like "B.O.B", "ATliens", "Aquemini", "Hey Ya!", "Hootie Hoo", and the "Whole World".□ With a huge discography to pull from, they move at lightning speed, flowing from one track to the next and never giving the crowd a moment to stop moving.□

The Ocean Stage is in an imaginative location, right beneath the I-64 ramp, seeming to nestle in to its surroundings and create a darker atmosphere, perfect for the lights of electronic acts like Mimosa and St. Lucia.

Against Me! explode onto the Boom Stage, and it is easy to see why so many festival goers have been proudly sporting their t-shirts.□ With a set including "Black Me Out", "I Was A Teenage Anarchist", "New Wave", and "Sink, Florida, Sink", Against Me! bring the energy to the sky.



The Districts

The WFPK Port Stage again has an excellent locale, where it is possible to sit on the steps and watch the band and then, at set change, the magnificent Ohio River. However, when the Districts rage in, don't expect to spend much time watching the barges go downstream. From a small town in Pennsylvania, they spin their unique blend of Indie Rock to fans that respond with fists in the air. "Rocking Chair" could easily be one of the best performances of the day.

Now, if at any point you'd like to head over to the Bourbon Lodge, prepare yourself for a unique experience! Sit in a cozy, "living room" type surrounding as you are educated on all things bourbon. Learn about the distillation, barreling, and aging process, or watch celebrity bartenders from Spoon serve up some of their favorite libations. You can learn to cook with bourbon, meet Master Distillers, and learn about the Kentucky Bourbon Trail. These are events that you will not want to miss!

And surely by now you may be wondering where all of those delicious smells are wafting in from! Forecastle brings some of the best food vendors in the region to offer quality, tasty food choices when it's time to fuel up before that next band hits the stage. Visit Holy Mole Tacos, Pie For The People, Phat Daddies, and a host of other regional favorites!



Now, there is a hush in the air. Throngs of people crowd onto the lawn, for what is a day of great anticipation. This is Day Two at Forecastle, and the mighty Jack White is on the bill. But let's not get ahead of ourselves, because each stage hosts a lineup that will leave this ever-growing crowd painfully deciding who to see, which shirts to buy, and how they will communicate when they lose their voices before tomorrow.

Set to play on the Mast Stage are the Soul Rebels, Spanish Gold, Sharon Jones and the Dap-Kings, Band of Horses, and Jack White.

The Boom Stage counters with Hurray For The Riff Raff, Boy & Bear, Lord Huron, Jason Isbell, and Dwight Yoakam.

On the Ocean Stage, patrons will expect to see Anwar Sadat, Young & Sick, Avey Tare's Slasher Flicks, Kygo, and Slint.

Rounding up the performances on the WFPK Port Stage, you will find the Wans, Jill Andrews, Goodbye June, Jalin Roze, Mount Moriah, Johnnyswim, and Drew Holcomb & The Neightbors.



Soul Rebels

Opening the Mast Stage are the beyond entertaining Soul Rebels. Hailing from New Orleans, they mix their traditional style of brass band with popular songs, offering a unique sound that could hardly be duplicated. With a fantastic rendition of Michael Jackson's "Billie Jean", this crowd is more than ready for today's steady line of brilliant musical performances.

And it is very difficult to use the word "brilliant" and not skip immediately to Jack White... as that he completely embodies every aspect of the word. I often feel that even with his many accolades and accomplishments, that some people still manage to under-appreciate Jack White... perhaps because he is obviously just THAT good. However, when you are anxiously standing before him, watching as he prowls across the stage as if he had been born on it, the magnitude of the songs that he performs and the manner in which they are delivered is breathtakingly overwhelming. Fans of his solo project, the White Stripes, and the Raconteurs are all equally

ecstatic as he rips through his newest single "Lazaretto", and throws in "Top Yourself", the hauntingly beautiful "Love Interruption", "Ball and Biscuit", "Steady As She Goes" and "Icky Thump", creatively mixed with Jay Z's "99 Problems". Playing a FOURTY MINUTE encore, White has the fans worked into a frenzy, as they begin to hum the familiar strains of "Seven Nation Army" during a brief pause. Being the entertainer that he is, White obliges, met with thunderous applause. It is definitely a memorable moment in festival history.

Starting off the day at the Boom Stage is Hurray For The Riff Raff. Alynda Lee Segarra is everything that one might expect from a talented folk artist, but with an extra serving of emotion that truly sets her apart. She seems to force you to "feel"... to connect to where you come from... with a humble, earnest approach that leaves you ready to download her newest album, *Small Town Heroes*

, as soon as you get home.

Over at the Ocean Stage, Kygo, a young Norwegian with tracks under his belt with the likes of Passenger and Ellie Goulding, is definitely making his presence known at Forecastle. A steady stream makes its way to the stage, excited to see one inventive, entertaining performance!

And one of the most delightful acts of the entire weekend may be found on the WFPK Port Stage. Johnnyswim, composed of couple Andrea Sudano and Abner Ramirez, offer their melodious blend of pure magic to festival goers. Patrons are treated with masterpieces like "Diamonds" and "Heart Beats", also the title track to their latest album... which, if you leave Forecastle yearning for new music, let this be your absolute first purchase. They are both beautiful and imaginative, as they pen a love story right before your eyes... taking you on an emotional roller coaster through the peaks and valleys of life, as seen through their very own souls and interpreted through some of the most gorgeous lyrics in the industry today. This is Forecastle at its finest.



Johnnyswim

The last day of Forecastle seems to leave the attendees with mixed emotions. It's sad... so sad that it is almost over, but because it is almost over, let's not miss a minute!

The Mast Stage returns with a vengeance, with Matrimony, Lucius, Brett Dennen, Jenny Lewis, the Replacements, and Beck.

On this final day, the Boom Stage reels in the crowd with The Weeks, Sharon Van Etten, Trampled By Turtles, Nickel Creek, and Ray Lamontagne.

The Ocean Stage excites festival goers with Blue Sky Black Death, Chrome Sparks, Claude Vonstroke, Tune-Yards, and Flume.

On the WFPK Port Stage, the river breeze blows in Thee Open Sex, Seluah,

Sun Kil Moon, Reignwolf, and Hayes Carll.□

But before you move over to any of the stages, everyone should have a bit of moonshine in their hand.□ Ole Smoky Moonshine must be nectar from the gods... a delicious concoction that can be both refreshing and exhilarating... all in one delicious gulp!



Heading to the Mast Stage, Matrimony opens the gates with yet another creatively fantastic husband/wife duo, backed up with a band composed of additional family members.□ Perhaps this is why their sound is so natural... so instinctual... as they dazzle the eager audience with nearly ethereal tracks like "Last Love".□

And to wrap up the Mast Stage, Beck shows that he still knows "where it's at", by easily illustrating that his multi-talented style can seamlessly translate from one generation to the next.□ Grandparents stand by

grandchildren, clapping their hands and snapping fingers to "Devil's Haircut", "Loser", "Debra", and the aforementioned "Where It's At".



At the Boom Stage, The Weeks come out rocking, with their unique take on contemporary Southern Rock, mixed deliciously with Soul, Funk, and every spice in between. The crowd is on their feet, hands in the air to the opening strains of "Buttons".

The Ocean Stage ushers in Flume, with his atmospheric beats that seem to make the overpass vibrate. Again, Forecastle does a magnificent job with the placement of this stage and the acts that appear on it throughout the

length of the festival.□

As you walk away from the Ocean Stage, be sure to check out the "Forecastle Boat", painted live by artists at the festival.□ The boat also sets sail on its imaginary ocean, constructed with bottles collected at the event. This is yet another super neat curiosity that reminds you that you are at Forecastle!



This final day at the WFPK Port Stage, things are definitely getting lively!□ Reignwolf takes the stage, exhilarating their fans with haunting, howling vocals that resonate in the air.□ Gritting guitars squeal out "Are You Satisfied", which I am obviously not, because I keep finding the need to listen to it over and over again.□ This tune is dangerously infectious!□

Watching the the crowd file out of the gates is usually a bit depressing.□

One can tell that people are mentally asking "So what's next?" Well, the folks at Forecastle are already buzzing about what may be in store for next year. They must be dipping into that bag of mystical Forecastle tricks, because it will be extremely difficult to top this weekend.

I'm glad they like doing the impossible.

I do, too. I will make it my day's mission to attempt to stop listening to anything and everything that Johnnyswim has ever recorded. Wait... why would I do that?

For additional information on Forecastle, visit them [online](#), and keep a lookout for next year's festival details.