

ROSFEST 2010 REPORT (excerpt)
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MANNING

Making their American debut on the heels of their acclaimed album *Number Ten*, Manning hit the stage for what should have been a sleepy afternoon set like a house afire. The band kicked off with a few numbers from Manning's impressive ten albums in ten-years catalog, and then opened the floodgates with the rowdy, jam-friendly "Ships" and continued for an amazingly diverse ninety minutes. With one of (if not the) largest ensembles at RoSfest, and many of the players being multi-instrumentalists, the skilled group was able to easily bring the multi-layered tonal palette of the albums to the stage.



Guy Manning proved to be an able and amiable front man for the band, often conducting from his center-stage position behind a pair of shades and underneath a hat. Eventually the disguise was discarded, and the band responded as though it was their cue to loosen up as well.

The set was very nicely paced between the rollicking jam numbers and a number of nice ballads, with one of my favorites from *Number Ten*, "The House on The Hill" receiving a very nice feature. Guy's between song banter also kept the set moving during instrument changes, while also letting us in on the stories behind some of the songs.

For the second act of the day, it was a very impressive set by a group that was ready to play, but still loose enough to have a lot of fun onstage. As an aside, I should mention that Guy Manning and band also appeared at the Saturday night VIP party for an impromptu semi-unplugged set. Even later in the evening, guitarist Chris Catling was still ready to play, providing lead guitar for the loose version of "Free Bird" (with yours truly picking up the bass!) that closed out the evening. Indeed, Manning is a group of musician's musicians.

After the gleeful energy that was Manning, Norway's Gazpacho took the stage with an entirely different approach.