



12.26.08

We have been receiving some questions lately regarding the Concourse and what we, the promoters of Sea of Dreams are doing to correct some of the problems that people have experienced in the past attending concerts at the Concourse. First off, the Concourse is a straight up rental house, meaning it comes with no lights, no sound and no staging. What this means is that each promoter is responsible for what results at their event. Knowing as we do some of the deficiencies of the past, Sea of Dreams is throwing a lot of extra firepower AND attention at the problems this year; higher stages, bigger sound, better lights.. all to ensure the talent gets heard and seen right.

There is a long string of comments on yelp.com, and though most all reference other shows (MIA, Belle & Sebastian, etc.) produced by other promoters, to take on this important issue, one of our co-promoters, Robbie Koval, stepped forward with the following in an attempt to address some of the real (and imagined) problems traditionally associated with the Concourse as a concert venue.

- spoon (anon)

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Robbie here from Sunset (sunsetpromotions.net). I love Yelp, and hearing what people really think about our events helps us identify how we can improve them. If someone takes the time to write, they obviously care a lot.

SEA OF DREAMS is going to be quite different this year from previous years. That's not to say it hasn't been wonderful already. But some of the comments on yelp, and on other sites showed us areas where this event needed to improve. SOUND was a big one, as was the LAYOUT of the space as well as BOOKING and BOX OFFICE. An event like this is a collection of hundreds of little details, any ONE of which can leave someone going home unhappy. NYE is the most pressure-packed night of the year with the added pressure of getting EVERYONE in before midnight, as well as the enhanced expectations that go along with the night.

The major change this year is that the visionaries at **anonEvents** reached out to two other independent SF production companies for help. My company, **Sunset Promotions**, and **blasthaus** (<http://blasthaus.com>) are joining Anon this year to help PERFECT Sea of Dreams. That they brought US on, and not some huge

out-of-town corporation is a testament to their values. Anon, Sunset and blasthaus really DO give a damn that the events we produce are run perfectly. We all feel the need to work hard to get every one of those one thousand details RIGHT. I'm not sure if we'll pull it off, but we're working like hell. Here are some areas we think you'll see a major difference in Sea of Dreams this year.

SOUND is a HUGE issue at the Concourse, a giant brick and wood warehouse. Many who saw MIA complained as did a good many from SOD '08. Thankfully however, this isn't as difficult to improve as you may think. One key aspect is how the sound is oriented. For MIA, the sound system was aimed east at the glass wall on 7th, and little was done to baffle the glass and cut down on bounceback. For Sea of Dreams the main stage will be facing west from 7th street. **Golden Gate Sound**, the same guys who made James Brown sound so good at FoggFest, and who managed to make Grace Pavilion sound so exquisite at Harmony last summer, are producing the main stage. They have as fine a system as you can get in California, a line-array system that is being oriented so that everyone in the room hears the music equally and no-one is drowned out. Increased baffling, and pipe and drape will be erected to cut down on feedback and bounce. **Spider Ranch** sound will be handling the other two stages and they have similar reputation for quality. If that alone doesn't tell you we're serious, how about the fact that we were willing to TRIPLE the budget on sound alone to make sure we get it right. The Concourse is STILL a brick warehouse, but we think we've taken the right steps to improve the sound as much as humanly possible. We'll be interested in your feedback.

LAYOUT is crucial too. It's a HUGE space and in past years it has had as many as 7 soundsystems bleeding into each other. This year, we're simplifying the layout, with THREE major systems, orientated to minimize bleed. It enables us to concentrate on those three areas to make them distinct environments with more cohesive decor and feel. Spending extra to bring up the legendary **Do LaB** (<http://thedolab.com> - Lightning in a Bottle) to create an auditory garden in our lobby DJ area is an example of the attention we are giving to this issue. Sometimes simplifying helps you move *closer* to perfection.

BOOKING is a huge issue and I think we think we caught the brass ring this year. **Thievery Corporation** ALONE with their 20-person live ensemble doing a 2-hour set is massive. **Bassnectar** is a local phenom that's gone NATIONAL, selling more tickets in the US this year than ANY ELECTRONICA ACT. We gave a lot of thought to different types of music at different times and places so that at any point in the night you ought to be able to hear something soft, AND something hard; something instrumental offset against something electronic, something to look at and something to dance to. The schedule is staggered so that cabaret, dance and performance artists will be popping off at all times.

BOX OFFICE is HUGE on NYE. We've doubled the number of people at the gate, and hired a professional crew (InTicketing.com) to manage the process. We'll have more signs, more vocal greeters, and hopefully less confusion and waiting even though we've sold TWICE as many tickets. Last year, at Sunset's NYE show at Temple, we processed 1000 people before midnight with just TWO hosts. This year we'll have up to 20. Again, we'll be looking forward to your feedback.

There's a lot more, but the big picture is that we're looking at EVERY DETAIL and trying to get them ALL right. It's what you expect and deserve if you are entrusting us with your hard earned cash on the biggest night of the year. We hope to live up to your highest hopes. More info can be found at www.seaofdreamsnye.com

Feel free to ping me with questions or feedback at
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