

# ROB FALGIANO

PRESS: ALL STAR HEART

## THE BUFFALO NEWS ENTERTAINMENT

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Ingrid Michaelson performing at Thursday at the Square.  
Shane Cantillon, Buffalo News

### Ingrid intrigues

*Michaelson wows the Square crowd with catchy lyrics*

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Music and marketing usually make for uncomfortable bedfellows — the more obnoxious the melody, the better suited it is for a company's jingle (except for the theme to "Mr. Bucket," which totally shreds). But over the last decade, some savvy brands have harnessed the power of largely unknown music, making it the centerpiece of much-talked-about campaigns. Back in 2007, Old Navy presented us with one of those ideal marriages of art and product, using Ingrid Michaelson's song "The Way I Am" as the focal point of a sweater promotion. Audiences got way more than a hard sell, discovering a deftly romantic tune from an artist they likely had never heard of.

In Lafayette Square on Thursday evening, Michaelson gave a performance that proved her capable of more than selling cardigans. Taking the stage to a very large crowd, the New York City-area singer-songwriter delivered the song "Soldier,"

off her 2009 album "Everybody." It showcased all of the reasons why Michaelson is such a hit with the teens — driven by her enthusiastic ukulele strumming and the bright vocal harmonies of her five-piece band, "Soldier" is concerned with people unlucky in love, full of empowering messages like, "I don't believe in anything but myself" and, "The battle of the heart can be won."

The bandleader's light, Lilith Fair-primed sound went down easy, from the irresistible "ba-da dum" chorus of "Die Alone" to a sprightly ode to teenage love called "The Hat." A new song, "Parachute," found her band dishing out an effective R&B groove — and when paired with lyrics about the protective power of love, the cut sounded like Michaelson's answer to Rihanna's "Umbrella."

The undoubted high point of her set was a song called "You and I," during which the singer pulled an audience member onstage to sing the song's duet portion. Performed with vocals, ukulele, bass drum and a crowd that knew every word, the song's infectious melody and sweet-as-pie lyrics (e.g. "We've got our love to pay the bills") made for a heaping helping of positive vibes.

While Michaelson's chirpy voice and teen-diary styled lyrics might not be appropriate for every mood, they sure felt right on this beautiful, cusp-of-summer night.

After a set by local singer/ songwriter Rob Falgiano, whose remarkable vocal range turned some heads, the crowd was treated to the mesmerizing country stylings of A. A. Bondy. From the outset of his set, he made it clear that he wasn't interested in providing the soundtrack to a party. "The Mightiest of Guns," his opening song, was a slow-building, profoundly beautiful concoction of rich pedal steel chords, guitar, keyboards and lyrics like, "With every breath, you drink in the night." Sure, these Southern-fried extended mood pieces weren't what this Thursday at the Square crowd was necessarily looking for. But I'd wager a good bunch of the crowd was able to feel something real.

Over the fantastic, methodical thump of the song "Killed Myself When I Was Young," Bondy sang, "I will come back someday." A. A., we're gonna take that as a promise.

#### REVIEW

WHO: Ingrid Michaelson with A. A. Bondy

WHEN: Thursday evening

WHERE: Thursday at the Square, Lafayette Square

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— Joe Sweeney, *The Buffalo News* (Buffalo, NY)

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