

## Wakarusa Music and Camping Festival, Lawrence, KS, 6/7-6/10, 2007



Written by Brad Hodge

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Photo credit Michael Didyoung

The lush green prairies and rolling hills of eastern Kansas have always seemed like an oasis in the middle of a desolate flat sea of grain and corn. Nestled along the shores of Lake Clinton, **Wakarusa** not only provided beautiful landscape and gorgeous weather but one of the summer's most jam-friendly festivals.

Outstanding headline performances by the likes of **Ben Harper and the Innocent Criminals**, **Widespread Panic** and **Les Claypool's Fancy Band** were complemented by stand-out sets from up-and-coming acts like **Outformation**, **Railroad Earth** and **Tea Leaf Green**.

**Perpetual Groove** shifted the festival into high gear with its Thursday night tent performance and cover of Kanye West's "We Don't Care." Then they greeted the crowd on Friday with 75 minutes from the main stage, including a version of "Woke Up This Morning" with **JJ Grey** of **MOFRO**.

Many of the bands played multiple sets over Wakarusa's six stages, making it possible to catch such groups as the **North Mississippi Allstars**, The New Mastersounds and Animal Liberation Orchestra.

Friday was filled with diversity from the front porch soul of the Allstars and **Shannon McNally** (joined by **Luther Dickinson** and Kenny Brown for the entire set) to the bounce of Asheville, North Carolina's **Yo Mama's Big Fat Booty Band**. **Tom Morello**, of Rage Against The Machine/Audioslave fame, offered a number of revolutionary songs as **The Nightwatchman**.

Saturday started with a schedule change, as **Vince Herman** and **Great American Taxi** substituted for **ALO** after their late-night show turned into sunrise set. Possibly one of the most anticipated sets of the festival, the **John Butler Trio** lived up to the hype, with the band's namesake moving from acoustic guitar to Weissenborn to banjo on songs like "Gov Did Nothin'" and "Used to Get High."

The effervescent **Grace Potter** and her band **The Nocturnals** may have won over the most new fans with their blistering Sunday set, laden with rock 'n' roll panache. Meanwhile, there was so much more available for music lovers to absorb, such as electrifying performances by **Medeski Martin and Wood**, **Michael Franti**, **The Slip** and **Little Feat**. And thanks to fan-friendly scheduling and taxi service you could be there for it all.

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