

Chic this week

Shooter Chic: Jewel Hits Fashion, Fan Interactivity Bullseye

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Jewel Swag (signed copy of Sweet and Wild CD, media pass) Also pictured is the pin pad we used for interactive portions of the show.

As a good journalist, I have to tell you this upfront: I'm a Jewel fan.

And not just the "I know the words to 'Foolish Games'" kind of fan. I'm a "I've been to every Jewel concert to come within a 200 mile radius of me, read all her books, and have every song she's ever recorded memorized" kind of fan.

So when I got a press release about Jewel hosting an interactive concert, and the ability to see it here in Cincinnati, I jumped at the opportunity to learn more. I emailed the folks who sent me the release and they agreed to give me a media pass to take part in the event and write a review on it.

I had never been to an "interactive concert" before and the press release was scarce on details, so I tried to do some digging. I didn't find much, but I did learn that the company behind this new concert concept is Velocity Broadcasting. This Pittsburgh-based company apparently has a bunch of high definition television networks and they produce and broadcast custom-made, multimedia TV in HD. So, say a pharmaceutical company wants to do interactive videoconferencing with all the Rheumatologists across the nation, they'd call Velocity.

Well, Velocity apparently decided to spread its wings into the music world. And Jewel helped them do that. (I couldn't find any other artists that they did one of these interactive concerts with before Jewel's, so I'm assuming she's the first.)

So, here's what they did: The night before Jewel's new "Sweet and Wild" CD released, they had this virtual, interactive concert called "First Spin." It was a launch party of sorts. People all over the world purchased tickets (they were around \$100) through Velocity. You can actually still see Jewel's promo video of the event at www.velocityboxoffice.com. The ticket price included the concert and a four course meal. Here in Cincinnati, the two locations to choose from were Mortons Steakhouse and Maggianos (I chose Mortons).



Event Emcee and Jewel. Explaining how to vote via pin pad on the three outfit options.

I get there, and I'm greeted with a signed copy of Jewel's not-yet-released "Sweet and Wild" CD. SCORE! Each guest got one as part of their ticket price. Then came the amazing food (I had crab cakes and filet mignon... yum!) while we watched live behind the scenes footage of Jewel backstage.

An emcee of the event took us through her motorcoach, we met her puppy and saw where she writes on the road. Then the interactive portion of the event began.

We were given little pin pads. They looked like mini remote controls. Backstage, Jewel gave us the opportunity to pick her first and last song via vote with our remote controls. Then she went through her closet and picked out three outfits for us to vote on. (The little floral sundress I voted on won by a landslide!)

Then we got to do a 10-question Jewel trivia game using our pin pads. This was like crack for all the Jewel fans in the room. The prize – for the most correct answers and quickest response time – was an iPad signed by Jewel. The questions were tough, but I got 7 out of 10 right. Right after the game was over, the system tabulated results and live broadcasted who won. Jewel talked to the winner live, signed the iPad for her on the air and asked her which song she'd like her to play at the concert. How cool is that?



Steel Magnolia singer and her yummy blinged out necklace

And just to give us a feel of the thousands of other people (the release said this had the potential to reach 165,000 people globally) tuning in to Jewel's performance that night, they showed live feeds from locations around the world – from Canada and Australia to a big blogger party in Florida. It was so neat to know I was part of such a large group of Jewel fans that night, even though I was sitting in a small room of about 10 people.

Steel Magnolia was the opening act. The female singer was wearing a super fab necklace. Big, chunky and sparkly – as all good jewelry should be. :) They were talented! The ladies at my table really liked them. I was too overwhelmed with anticipation to see Jewel... wearing what I voted for her to wear and play what I voted for her to play.

Jewel finally came on and it was euphoric. She was wearing the cute little floral number, oh and her guitar strap was lined with bullets – a trend I'll now refer to as "shooter chic." :)



Jewel and her "Shooter Chic" guitar strap

She played for more than an hour. It was in such crisp HD, I felt like I was there popping her bubble of personal space. But in reality, I was (at this point) sipping a cup of coffee and enjoying a nice piece of key lime pie in the comfort of a steakhouse.

She was performing live in Pittsburg (actually in the same studios where Mr. Roger's was filmed). And with this experience, I genuinely felt like I was there. I was skeptical about it at first. I wondered if it would essentially be like watching a pre-recorded Jewel concert on a cheap projector. Granted, I probably still would've gone.

But this... this was an amazing experience like none other. It was unlike any in-person Jewel concerts I had ever gone to, or any other music performance I've participated in (I'm married to a musician, so I've seen my fair share).

I left there invigorated. I knew I had just been to "the concert of the future." It had every thing our society wants right now: immediate, on-demand interaction. I was so proud of Jewel for being the musician who made this forward-thinking performance possible. Not bad for an Alaskan girl who grew up in a one-room cabin!

Check out the video below I shot from the event. Gives you a good idea of how the room was set up! And [click here](#) to get her CD. Or at least see the must-have shooter chic outfit she's wearing on the cover. She's smokin'! Enjoy!