

It's Friday night, and Fountain Square's all-ages, DIY venue, Hoosier Dome, is packed despite the steady drizzle outside. Indianapolis self-labeled easycore band The Day After has handpicked the lineup for their Ten-Year Anniversary Show, "A Decade After", with careful consideration. The result is an obvious success; the show drawing a brimming crowd, the energy and excitement apparent the moment one walks through the stooped doorway. Colin Fiol, the band's bassist, excitedly introduces me to one of his music students, a boy he later lets on is only a year older than the band itself. He will, for much of the show, be standing his ground at the front of the venue, grinning ear-to-ear. Despite all of this, there is nothing to indicate, yet, that the night will bring about anything but a good show and little more. These first impressions could not be more wrong.

Formed in the summer of 2008, The Day After has played an important role in the development of the current Indianapolis scene, supporting all-ages music and pursuing a hardworking, DIY approach to music and creativity. The show's lineup is a mix of old friends and new faces, beginning with Indianapolis electronic metalcore mix, Perceptions, a local favorite who are immediately able to capture the scattered energy in the room and divert it towards the stage. The Day After invited heavy pop-punk influenced Chicago band Action/Adventure to follow this opening set with their own high energy and intricate lyricism, and despite being an out-of-state act at what is clearly a show heavy in its nostalgic roots, they are welcomed and well-received. Glass Hands, another Indianapolis favorite, is best described as a metalcore band with a variety of genre influences. Having been a staple in the scene for almost as long as The Day After, Glass Hands captures the crowd with equal fervor and encourages their energy. Hard Loss, St. Louis emo/pop punk, rounds out the list with a mix of original songs, and covers of The Wonder Years and "Somebody Kill Me Please", from the Wedding Singer, which turns out to be a crowd favorite.

It's well into the night by the time The Day After takes the stage. They start with "An Open Letter", and already people are pressed to the stage, singing with full abandon. They follow this with a song that hasn't seen the light of day since the very beginnings of the band itself. Lead vocalist and guitarist Kevin Kirk prefaces the song. "Let people grow and change," he tells the crowd, in reference to old lyrics. The setlist delves into the archives of the band's discography, mixing old with new, and receiving equal energy and emotion directed towards both. The current line up invites previous members Connor Jones, Chris Aveline, and Sam Gordon to take the stage throughout the set. In the case of former bassist Chris Aveline, he invites his girlfriend of five years to the stage between songs and introduces her to the crowd, before producing a box and bending down on one knee to propose. Her "yes" can't be heard above the joyous cheers from the room, but the look on her face speaks for itself.

It's obvious that the show is as much for the crowd, a combination of long-time friends, former members and venue owners, and fresh faces, as it is for those on stage. Kirk assures the room during a break in the set that there will be a future for The Day After, and that they intend to devote their time and energy to creating and releasing new content within the year. These words seem to bring relief to much of the room as they are spoken out loud. In Kirk's own words, "We're committed to making the best of what opportunities this band can bring us." By the time the band plays "Time Well Wasted", a song with a heavy emotional connection to both its members and its listeners, there are more than a few unabashed tears being shed. The venue remains full long after the set is over, people milling around with excitement drawn across their faces.

"I love all the people we get to meet on our adventures and love hearing their stories on how music has affected them," said Dan Herring, the band's drummer, in a post about the show last week. It's a sentiment that is evident in the way the four of them linger in the room talking to friends and strangers alike, as the crowd slowly trickles out onto the rainy sidewalk. "It's what I'm meant to do," says Jacob Rangel, current guitarist, of playing music. It's been ten years since The Day After was formed, and

despite member changes and hiatuses, they continue to assert that “they aren’t finished yet”. It’s a fact that’s evident in the heart and soul of this celebratory show, with much more to come in the near future and an ever-growing group of people ecstatic to see new music brought to life.