

Penny & Sparrow and Field Guide at Union Transfer 4.17.25
By Jay Leiby

On a windy night in Philadelphia, Penny & Sparrow and Field Guide brought some warmth to Union Transfer with their indie folk music. Opening up the show was Field Guide, based in Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada. He played solo, just him and his guitars. He played a mix of songs from his 2024 album 'Rootin' For Ya' and a few from 2021's 'Make Peace with That'. He admitted to being a little tired because the bands had gone out to eat and partied a bit in Baltimore the day before, and said the set was 'no thoughts, all vibes', which was charming and funny. Field Guide plays introspective and memorable soft rock, mostly love songs, which echoed gently in the venue for a somewhat sleepy and low-key set. He finished up the set with the song 'You Were' from a 2020 EP, somewhat of a breakthrough hit for him.

After Field Guide serenaded us, Penny & Sparrow took the stage. A folk duo consisting of Andy Baxter and Kyle Jahnke, from Austin, Texas, Penny & Sparrow play a mix of indie folk and alt pop. Their live setup was also pretty spare, with Andy and Kyle singing while Kyle played acoustic guitar. Later in the set, they had Field Guide back up onstage to play some guitar while Kyle played drums. In January of this year they released a 20 song album, Lefty, on the record label Thirty Tigers. This band had great witty and funny stage banter, and was even doing crowd work a bit, riffing on members of the audience and inviting a woman who's birthday it was to pick the next song they were going to play. They remarked in between songs that the audience was extremely respectful and attentive. A highlight of the set was the song 'Breakdown' from Lefty which Andy introduced as having written about a panic attack for the first time, mentioning he's now in therapy for anxiety. This honest moment about mental health was refreshing. Overall, Field Guide and Penny & Sparrow lit up the venue with their wholesome and sweet music.