

Home > Music > News

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# Bruce Springsteen Lights Up the Jersey Shore With Four Different Performances at Asbury Park’s Sea. Hear. Now. Festival

By Michele Amabile Angermiller ▾



Photo: Pooneh Ghana

For decades around the seaside city that he made famous, Asbury Park locals have said regularly, “Bruce might show up.” Last weekend at the [sixth annual Sea. Hear. Now Festival](#), he certainly did: *Four* separate times.

“Greetings, Asbury Park!” Springsteen declared to the more than 35,000 fans stretched out on the beach, as he and the E Street Band hit the stage Sunday night promptly at 7:30 p.m. for a 30-song, three-hour and 15-minute set that extended beyond

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the 10:30 p.m. curfew. The greetings were unnecessary — not only is he the city's best-known denizen, he'd already been onstage three times during the weekend, joining photographer/ festival co-founder Danny Clinch's band on Saturday night at the nearby Stone Pony nearby, and sitting in with both local heroes the Gaslight Anthem and Phish's Trey Anastasio for surprise performances earlier in the day.

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on a beach in Asbury Park,” Anastasio said after the Boss left the stage, noting that he’d grown up in New Jersey and that his first concert was a Springsteen show.

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The surprises continued during Springsteen’s headlining set: After the band kicked off with “Lonesome Day” from the 2002 album, “The Rising,” he said, “I wrote this song about 500 yards north of here on Loch Arbor Beach. We haven’t played it in a long fucking time. We got a lot of stuff we haven’t played in a long fucking time. Let’s see how we do.”

With that, the band roared through a three-song stretch of tracks from his debut album, “Greetings From Asbury Park”: “Blinded by the Light,” “Does this Bus Stop at 82nd Street?”, and “Growin’ Up,” complete with a comic interlude about driving through empty streets of Asbury Park during its desolate years not so long ago, and wondering now, after its resurgence, “Where did all these people fucking come from?”

The playful banter continued during “Spirit in the Night,” where Springsteen amped the theatrics to summon a Jersey shore “wolf howl” at the moon.



Springsteen with Gaslight Anthem

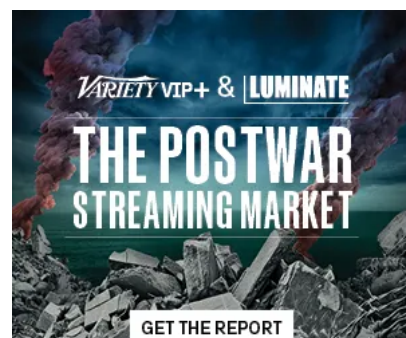
The surprises didn’t stop there. The band dusted off a

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randy “Thundercrack,” a song he said he wrote “when I was 20 up at the surfboard factory in Wanamassa.”

Later, Springsteen delivered a holy-grail moment of Born to Run’s “Meeting Across the River” into “Jungleland” with a passionate saxophone solo provided by Jake Clemons, violin work from Soozie Tyrell and a lovely trumpet solo by Curt Ramm.

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Other highlights included “4th of July, Asbury Park (Sandy), with a dedication to the band’s late, longtime organist Danny Federici.

Springsteen’s wife and E Street Bandmember Patti Scialfa – who recently revealed that she is battling multiple myeloma – made a surprise appearance as well, joining Bruce for their familiar duet on “Tougher Than the Rest,” from 1987’s Tunnel of Love.

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Springsteen peppered his stage banter with plenty of local flavor: He introduced “Local Hero” with a funny

story about seeing a black velvet painting of himself at the five-and-dime store J.J. Newberry's in his nearby hometown of Freehold.

"I look in the window and I see this black velvet painting of a Doberman Pinscher, and I look on the other side, and I see this black velvet painting of Bruce Lee," he said. "And I look in the middle, and I see a black velvet painting of myself with the headband and the muscles," he laughed at the classic image of himself in his 1980s "Born in the U.S.A." getup. "And I went home and wrote this song."

Springsteen wrapped the set with "Rosalita," "Born to Run," "Dancing in the Dark," and "Twist and Shout" before closing the night with his cover of Tom Waits' "Jersey Girl" — because "Down the shore, everything's all right."

"Wow, I'm feeling fucking old tonight, but in a good way," he said. "The band, we were here on that little street corner, when nobody was here. I didn't know if I would see folks in this good town again. I just want to take a moment to thank all the good people that have invested themselves in Asbury Park and brought the city back."



Springsteen with Danny Clinch  
Michael Kravetsky / A3

Springsteen kicked off the weekend early Saturday night, joining festival co-founder Danny Clinch's Tangiers Blues Band for a freewheeling jam of blues and garage rock classics that also featured Robert Randolph, Grace Potter and E Street Band member Jake Clemons. The Rock and Roll Hall of Famer celebrated the Stone Pony's 50th Anniversary with a short video filmed in the club, "where it all began." On stage, he strapped on a guitar for a one-two punch of "Boom, Boom," followed by the Will Bradley Trio's "Down the Road Apiece" (after Springsteen gathered

all musicians on stage for a discussion of what to play next). The crowd was then treated to Little Richard's "Lucille" and Van Morrison's "Gloria."

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Other highlights of the festival included Saturday night's headliner, Noah Kahan, who rocked Johnny Cash's "Folsom Prison Blues" with Clinch's band at the Pony, honoring the loss of Cash's brother, Tommy, who passed at the age of 84 earlier that day. Johnny and June Cash had invested \$250,000 in Asbury Park's Berkeley Carteret hotel in the mid-'80s. During his main set on Saturday, Kahan set the tone early with his hit, "Dial Drunk," as well as "Call Your Mom," "Northern Lights," "Homesick" and of course "Stick Season." Kahan cracked many jokes throughout the evening.

"This is the first time I have been to New Jersey," he admitted. "All I did was watch 'The Sopranos!'"

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The Black Crowes, led by sometimes-feuding brothers Chris and Richard Robinson, took a moment to address Friday's onstage altercation in Boston between Jane's Addiction's singer Perry Farrell and guitarist Dave Navarro.

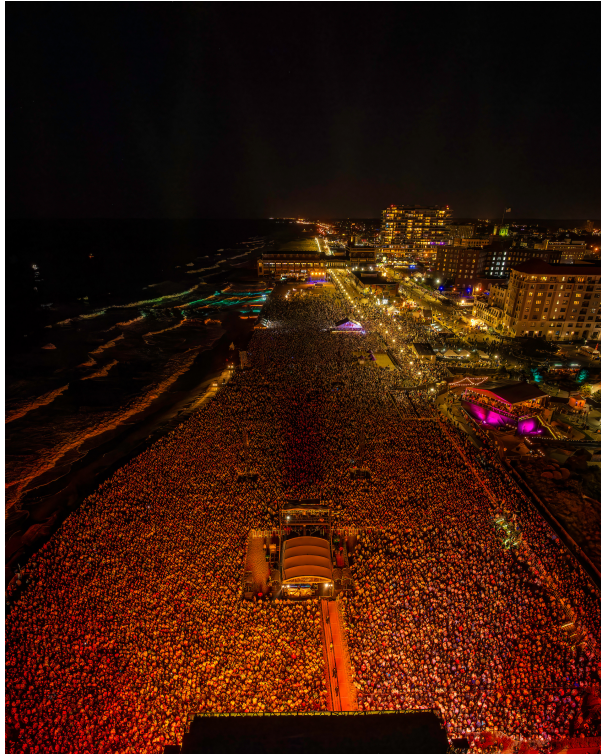
"We want to do this for Jane's Addiction," singer Chris Robinson said before playing "Remedy." "We hope they find peace."

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Other highlights of the festival included Norah Jones, Canadian NSFW electronic artist Peaches, New England rockers Guster and Swedish quintet the Hives, and Jersey City's Kool & the Gang, bringing an early celebration of their upcoming induction into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame.

Swedish songwriter Alexandra Jardvall, in town for the festival ahead of her own “Greetings from Sweden: A Springsteen Celebration” concert planned for Sept. 21 in her home country, said, “What a great festival this is. It’s a once-in-a-lifetime experience, seeing Bruce on the beach in Asbury Park.

“This is something we are going to talk about for the rest of our lives.”



Ismael Quintanilla III

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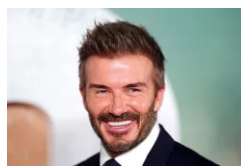
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