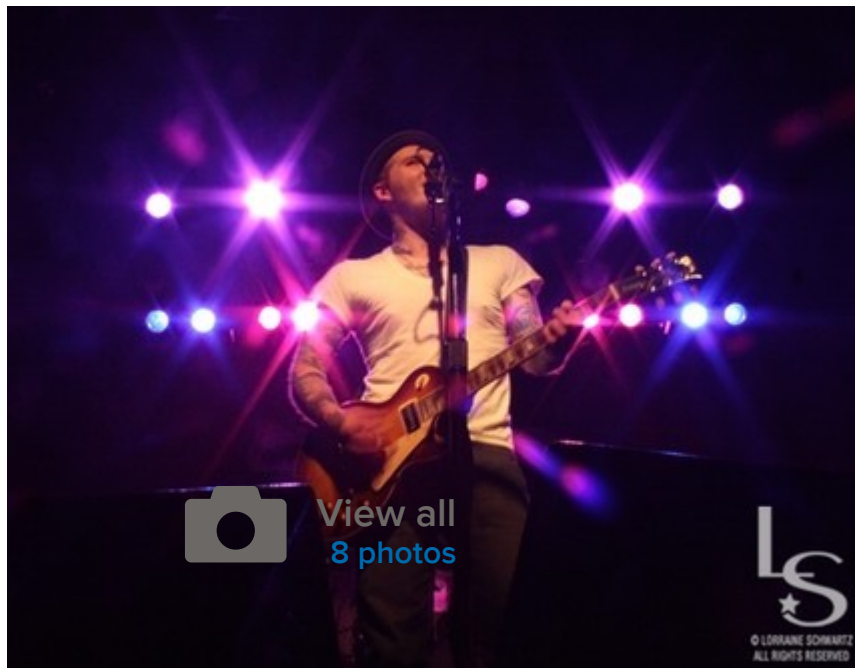


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Concert Review: The Gaslight Anthem at Irving Plaza

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Brian Fallon of The Gaslight Anthem. Photo by Lorraine Schwartz.

[The Gaslight Anthem](#) has won many fans besides myself, even among the supercritics. In April 2010, Rolling Stone Magazine declared singer Brian Fallon "The Next Jersey Rock Hero" and included him on their list of the Top 40 Reasons To Be Excited About Music. The ordinarily stoic Late Night TV host David Letterman got excited when they [performed](#) on his show last year, calling the band "Tremendous!" and thanked them



"for coming over the river" from their native New Jersey to play "The 59 Sound" for his audience. Besides The Gaslight Anthem, one of the few bands I personally recall seeing Dave get this pumped up for were the Foo Fighters, which is pretty good company to be in. If approval from tough customer Letterman wasn't enough, Bruce Springsteen joined The Gaslight Anthem on stage to play the song for the [Hyde Park Calling](#) crowd last summer. But I think YouTube user "choiechonga" summed it up best when [he/she commented](#) on an uploaded video of the group: "This band is so good it's stupid."

Guitarist Alex Rosamilia and vocalist Brian Fallon of The Gaslight Anthem at [Irving Plaza](#) 6/15/10.
Photo by Lorraine Schwartz

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The Gaslight Anthem releases new single

The Gaslight Anthem is one of the few modern bands out there that will restore your faith in rock and roll. Their spirit is old school, but their sound is New Millennium. Their no-gimmick rock and middle-class poetic lyrics have prompted comparisons to [Bruce Springsteen](#) and [The Clash](#), which I'm sure they don't mind. Who wouldn't like to be mentioned in the same breath as those brilliant stars?

With lyrical references to legends such as The Clash's Joe Strummer, Springsteen, Miles Davis and **Tom Petty**, it was clear who their influences were just by reading some of the song titles. Being the honest Jersey boys you hope them to be, they've never tried to deny they were paying musical homage to their heroes and freely admit it. In the '**Making of American Slang**' documentary (posted on their site) Brian Fallon says they made their last record, "**The '59 Sound**" with the idea they wanted to show people what they're into and so he let his influences "take over."

But this time around, Fallon says he let his influences "do the flavors rather than the actual thing", and asked himself "What do YOU sound like? What do YOU have to say musically?" By approaching songwriting in this manner, and letting the music "Take me on its own journey instead of me taking it where I'd like it to go," the band was able to find their own voice and venture into creative territory they hadn't before. As Fallon said to their sold out Irving Plaza crowd on Tuesday night, "Daddy's got some new tricks this year!"

Playing to a house full of old school fans from their days of playing the Court Tavern as well as new school "59" fans, The Gaslight Anthem (vocalist Fallon, guitarist Alex Rosamilia, bassist Alex Levine and drummer Benny Horowitz) celebrated the release of their new CD "**American Slang**" (out in stores now) by dedicating a good chunk of their setlist to the entire album (sans "We Did It When We Were Young"). Some of those songs were played this past weekend during their set at Bonnaroo, but most were being heard live for the first time Tuesday night. All of the new material was received warmly, including opener "American Slang", "Queen of Lower Chelsea", "Old Haunts" and "Stay Lucky." A few older songs such as "Old White Lincoln", "We Came To Dance", "Blue Jeans & White T-Shirts", "Great Expectations", "The Backseat" and "Drive" (dedicated to the Old School kids in attendance) also found their way onto the setlist. But it was their breakout single "**The '59 Sound**" that rocked the house. Literally. The floorboards were bouncing up and down underneath my feet and I wasn't even jumping!

In the "American Slang" documentary Brian says "Everybody tells you, you can be anything you wanna be. It's the American dream! But it doesn't quite work out that way most of the time." Going by the grin on Fallon's face when he looked out at his fans, friends and family Tuesday night, I'd like to quote their song "**I'da Called You Woody, Joe**" back to them and say boys, "you're doing alright."

Download "American Slang" (the single) for free this week on iTunes. The Gaslight Anthem will be returning to the East Coast this summer:

7/29/10 Philadelphia, PA- Great Plaza at Penn's Landing

7/31/10 Providence, RI- Lupo's

8/2/10 Boston, MA -House of Blues

8/5/10 Asbury Park, NJ- Stone Pony

For the rest of their tour dates, visit their [official site](#).

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Lorraine Schwartz
NY concert Examiner

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