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## Concert Review: The Gaslight Anthem at Convention Hall; Springsteen Surprise

Have you ever had a night that was so great you didn't want it to end? Where going to bed even though you're exhausted doesn't appeal to you because it's acknowledging the fabulous night is over? For many fans of [The Gaslight Anthem](#), tonight was one of those nights.

*Lorraine Schwartz*

New Jersey's [The Gaslight Anthem](#) is not currently on tour at the moment and the last show they played in the area was at the Bamboozle Festival back in [April](#). So the fact the band was playing at all, and a hometown gig to boot, was already enough of a holiday gift for diehard fans looking for a show fix. Little did they know just how much of a gift they were about to receive.

"It's Christmas time right? Am I good to you?" singer Brian Fallon asked his audience. "Check this out", he said with a big grin. From backstage emerged a familiar Jersey face. It was none other than The Boss. Yes THAT Boss. [Bruce Springsteen](#).

At every Gaslight show in the NY/NJ area that I've attended, crowd members have often shouted "Bruuuuce" during the band's set. Since the band has always been open about Springsteen's influence on their sound, I always took the vocal tribute as a general announcement of "Hey, The Gaslight Anthem, you love Bruce and so do we!" It almost seemed inappropriate given we were not actually AT a Springsteen show. But eventually I became conditioned to these random Bruce lovefests and have learned to ignore the shouts. So, you can imagine my surprise when, for once, he was actually there!

To say the crowd went nuts when Springsteen came out on stage would be a total understatement. Ballistic might be a better word. Besides the audience going crazy for the surprise guest, the band was obviously overjoyed as well going by the huge smiles on their faces as they played "American Slang" with Bruce on guitar and backup vocals. If you were to ask any Gaslight Anthem fan, or member of The Gaslight Anthem, what their wildest fantasy wish would be, a Gaslight/Bruce jam session on the Convention Hall stage at Christmastime would probably be it.

As it turns out, the band may have also been just as surprised as the crowd by Bruce's appearance. According to a post made on the band's message board, [Dimestoresaints.com](http://Dimestoresaints.com), drummer Benny Horowitz told fans after the show that they weren't completely positive Springsteen would join them until midway through their set. Apparently Bruce learned the song at the last minute and even gave "American Slang" a few listens moments before playing it live

with the band. You'd never know it from the performance. I guess Bruce is a quick learner!

Along with this massive Springsteen treat, The Gaslight Anthem also played a two hour set for their hungry fans that spanned all of their work, from Sink Or Swim to their latest iTunes session released just this past Fall. Highlights included "Angry Johnny and The Radio", "We Came to Dance", "Boomboxes And Dictionaries", "Navesink Banks", "1930", "The '59 Sound", "Wherefore Art Thou, Elvis", "Miles Davis & The Cool", "The Queen Of Lower Chelsea", "Our Fathers Sons", and stellar covers of the Who's "Baba O'Riley" and Pearl Jam's "State of Love and Trust." Aside from Bruce's guest spot, the loudest cheer of the night came at the mention of Asbury Park's own Cookman Avenue during "Blue Jeans & White T-Shirts."

Having been to a bunch of Gaslight Anthem shows in the past few years, including previous hometown shows, it's safe to say this was the most memorable. Fans were able to walk away tonight feeling good not only because of the fantastic show and seeing their Jersey heroes play together, but also because a portion of the ticket sales were donated to the Wounded Warrior Project (which you can find more information about [here](#)). All thanks to the Gaslight Anthem and their holiday spirit.

Check out my photos from the show here, with additional shots from the show [here](#).

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