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Concert recap: The Gaslight Anthem plays hometown gig at PNC Bank Arts Center

Saturday night, PNC Bank Arts Center closed out its Summer season with a hometown show by New Jersey's own [The Gaslight Anthem](#). Also on the bill were alt-rock heroes [Jimmy Eat World](#) and the force of nature that is [Against Me!](#) Though the two opening sets were stellar, the night clearly belonged to Gaslight.

As someone whose first Gaslight headline gig was Brooklyn Bowl a seemingly short five years ago (my review here), Saturday was quite a surreal experience even as a crowdmember. Instead of turning around and seeing a few hundred people, a bar and a dimly lit merch table a few feet away (as the case is with the smaller venues they ordinarily play), the view was of a sea of thousands and the rainy Jersey sky. My immediate thought was: "Where did all you people come from?!" So if it was a shock to me, it's hard to imagine how the five guys (singer/guitarist Brian Fallon, guitarists Alex Rosamilia and Ian Perkins, bassist Alex Levine, and drummer Benny Horowitz) must have felt when they first stepped out on to the stage.

Though drummer Horowitz had to rush home for a personal

emergency the night before in Philadelphia (Against Me!'s Atom Willard filled in like a pro, learning 13 songs in the few hours before showtime), he returned to play for his hometown fans and perhaps, going by his [tweet](#) Friday night, as a form of therapy to help cope with the unfortunate circumstances he unexpectedly found himself in this weekend. Thankfully his fans stepped up and were there for him the way he and his bandmates have been there for the fans through their music, cheering him on to show him he made the right decision to play that night.

The biggest crowd response of the evening, besides a post-stage shoutout from Fallon to one of his rock heroes Bruce Springsteen, came during the band's ballad "Blue Jeans & White T-Shirts." Normally at a hometown Gaslight show, after Fallon sings the lyrical promise "Some day I'll buy you that house on Cookman" (a reference to Cookman Avenue in Asbury Park), there are cheers of recognition. But on Saturday it was an all-out roar.

"Get Hurt" is the band's current CD (released last month), so there was a heavy dose of material from that album on the setlist. But the band did a great job of incorporating earlier material as well. Highlights included "Stay Vicious", "Even Cowgirls Get The Blues", "Handwritten", "Old Haunts", "We Came To Dance" (a tribute to their days playing New Brunswick's Court Tavern), "Navesink Banks", "The '59 Sound", and a great cover of The Who's "Baba O'Riley." For the final frenzied bars of the legendary Who song, Fallon joined Horowitz on drums as Levine thrashed on bass at the stage's edge to wild strobe lights behind him. After the last note was played, sticks were thrown into the air, and Horowitz pushed

his set over as if to say "And THAT'S how you play a Jersey rock show."

Check out my photos of the show [here](#).