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Concert recap: Van Halen at Bethel Woods Arts Center

Many viewed this past Labor Day weekend as the end of the Summer. So what better way to celebrate the end of this year's particularly sunny season with an outdoor show? This past Sunday night, Bethel Woods Arts Center played host to such a party when Van Halen came to town.

The venue was packed with loyal fans and first-timers who have seen the band through many ups and downs since they first hit the national music scene in 1978 with their self-titled debut record. Songs featured on that multi-platinum album still remain some of the most popular songs in rock history. Even in 2015, 37 years later, you can barely go a day without hearing classics like "Runnin' With The Devil", "Feel Your Love Tonight" or their cover of The Kinks classic "You Really Got Me" either coming out of your television or via terrestrial and/or satellite radio.

In fact, name a Roth-era hit and it was probably played. Besides the aforementioned songs, classics "Unchained", "Jump", "I'll Wait", "Panama", "Beautiful Girls", "Dance The Night Away" and "Hot For Teacher" were all included on the setlist. The personal highlight for this reporter was the brilliant "Everybody Wants Some", which was

prefaced with Roth announcing the "Some" he was after these days was hip-hop pop star Nicki Minaj.

The band's influence has continued on throughout the years since they burst onto the scene, with many musicians trying to imitate the flash and charisma of frontman David Lee Roth, Eddie Van Halen's out-of-this-world guitar playing and Alex Van Halen's unique drumming style. But of course, the only place you can find the real thing is to see the men themselves play live and in person.

Though some might be in favor of seeing the EXACT lineup they knew as a kid growing up in the late 70's/early 80's, Wolfgang Van Halen playing bass (in place of Michael Anthony) alongside his Father makes sense. And, regardless of past comments made back in forth in the press between Eddie Van Halen and his frontman Roth, any tension between the two wasn't visible on stage. Everyone was all smiles. As a fan who was one of the Van Halen concert virgins in the crowd, it's much appreciated that the two have figured out a way to work together and come out to entertain the masses. Whether everyone is best friends behind the scenes isn't important in the long run. What IS important at a concert is having fun, and a Van Halen show is just the place for that.

To see my photos of Van Halen click [here](#). For photos of their excellent opener, the Kenny Wayne Shepherd Band, click [here](#).