

TICKETING STAR AWARDS

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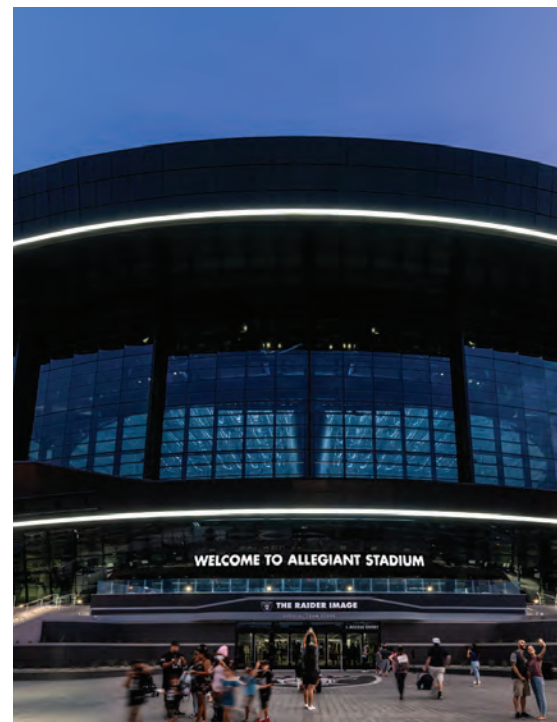
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BOOKINGS

VINTAGE PERFORMANCE: Emmylou Harris and The Red Dirt Boys perform on-stage for “Woofstock at the Wine Garden” Nov. 10 at City Winery Nashville.

Outdoors an Escape From Dark Days

City Winery Nashville has a busy fall season

BY BOB ALLEN

AFTER THE SHUTDOWN of the live entertainment industry last March, creativity was the key for many venues that had to find ways to ensure a safe environment for their customers. One such venue was City Winery Nashville, which created an outdoor setting for their concerts during the second half of 2020 by erecting a tent in the parking lot with a temporary stage and a lowered seating capacity.

“We’ve done our best to seat about 100 socially distant in that environment,” City Winery founder and CEO Michael Dorf told Pollstar last October. “We’ve been doing shows and we’re getting up to about five a week right now in Nashville. That’s been working really well, actually.”

And the boxoffice data reported through the end of 2020 shows it. The Music City performance venue, restaurant and winery staged 86 shows from late July to mid-December, when winter weather made it too cold for outdoor events.

With capacities varying between 100 and 125 for a concert, the number of sold tickets during that five-month span totaled 8,539, an average of about 100 per show.

The first artist to appear at the Nashville venue after the pandemic shutdown was veteran singer-songwriter John Hiatt, who headlined a three-show run on July 24-25 with his daughter Lilly Hiatt as the opening act. All three performances were sellouts, with an audience of 100 for each one. The combined gross was \$17,670 from tickets priced at \$55 and \$75.

Another late summer event featuring a headlining performance by Keb’ Mo’ was the event that logged the highest sold ticket count among the socially distanced shows. As one of three performers with a four-show engagement, the blues artist and Nashville resident played for 400 fans at early and late shows on Aug. 29 and 30 and grossed \$19,780.

Raul Malo of The Mavericks had the second-highest ticket count, with 339 sold seats during his four performances on Oct. 27 and 28 that earned \$20,789 in ticket

revenue, and Blackberry Smoke frontman Charlie Starr scored a \$13,480 take from his four-show stint with 315 sold tickets Dec. 16-17.

Emmylou Harris appeared along with guest artists three different times during the fall for shows benefiting two Nashville dog rescue and adoption organizations including her own nonprofit, Bonaparte’s Retreat. She played shows on Sept. 29 and 30, then returned in November, with gigs on Nov. 9 and 10 followed the next week with an appearance on Nov. 16. Across the five performances, the total ticket count numbered 510 for a combined gross totaling \$49,300.

Fifteen headliners played two shows at the venue, including two who appeared at two separate fall engagements with two shows booked at each.

Country music superstar Wynonna Judd had early and late shows on both Nov. 13 and Dec. 12. Her combined ticket count reached 500 at both appearances for a gross of \$29,690.

Americana artist Lucinda Williams also played on two separate occasions, first with shows on Oct. 31 and Nov. 1 and then again on Nov. 14 and 15. She moved a total of 475 tickets at both with a combined gross of \$30,270.

Currently, City Winery Nashville has dates booked through November including February shows by Jorma Kaukonen and Jon McLaughlin followed by many others including Asleep at the Wheel, Rufus Wainwright, Shaun Cassidy, Sheila E. and Sinead O’Connor later in the year. **V**



EYES ON SWIFT: The crowd enjoys Taylor Swift's 2015 concert at Raymond James Stadium. Her 2018 show produced the highest gross ever at the stadium.

LIVE! LANDMARKS

TAMPA VENUES SHINE WITH BOX-OFFICE BOUNTY

IN SPOTLIGHTING THE city of Tampa, the box-office success from live performance in all of its many forms, staged in its many venues, helps tell the story of the city's prolific standing as a robust center of live entertainment. Among the Tampa Bay metropolitan area's concert halls, clubs, indoor sports and entertainment arenas, outdoor amphitheaters and stadiums, we highlight just a few of those facilities that help define the city's rich narrative of live entertainment.

Looking first at the arenas, Amalie Arena's box-office history includes ticket sales from events that stretch back as far as Nov. 2, 1996, when Melissa Etheridge performed just two weeks after it opened. Her concert at the arena, then known as the Ice Palace, drew 6,048 fans.

The highest attendance on record for a concert headliner there came two years later

when Garth Brooks performed for 76,928 fans at four concerts. His shows Oct. 28-31, 1998, racked up a gross of \$1.6 million, but the value 22 years later is now \$1 million more than that.

Among all the events reported for the arena during its history, however, a family show holds the record for the most tickets sold at a single engagement. A January 2017 eight-show run of the now-defunct Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Circus produced a sold-ticket count of 81,933 to top the list. Averaging 10,242 tickets per show, the circus grossed \$2.2 million on Jan. 25-29 that year, just four months before the Feld Entertainment touring production closed permanently. According to the box-office archives, the circus claims 14 of the 17 best-attended events reported at Amalie Arena. From 2000 through 2017, Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Circus had 108 shows at the Tampa venue for a ticket count of 732,978 and a gross of \$15.9 million.

Looking at success based on gross earnings, Amalie Arena's highest-grossing concert on record came from Ariana Grande in 2019. She played Tampa during her "Sweetener" world tour, performing on Nov. 24 of that year and taking in \$2,764,402 from a single sold-out show. It topped an Oct. 19, 2005, performance by The Rolling Stones by only \$5,930. That concert, with its \$2.758 million gross in 2005, is valued at about \$3.7 million today.

Another indoor arena in the city is the 10,500-seat Yuengling Center (formerly the USF Sun Dome) at the University of South Florida. Its archived box-office records go



back to Jan. 23, 1982, with the first reported concert, a sold-out performance by The Oak Ridge Boys, occurring just over a year after the arena opened. The attendance record, though, was set by Neil Diamond who performed three-show engagements in both 1987 and 1988. Both still have the highest ticket counts on record, with 33,016 in 1988 and 32,899 the year before. The '88 performance grossed \$602,760, which held the record until Sept. 14, 2012, when Elton John topped it with \$906,665 from 10,009 sold seats.

Tampa's two stadiums that have been home to the NFL's Tampa Bay Buccaneers have both played a part in the city's concert history by hosting major headliners during their eras of

operation. Tampa Stadium, the team's home from 1976 through 1997, featured shows by such touring titans as The Rolling Stones, U2, Paul McCartney, Pink Floyd, The Who, George Strait and the Grateful Dead in the 1980s and 1990s. The first two decades of the 21st century saw U2, Taylor Swift, Beyoncé, One Direction, Ed Sheeran, Luke Bryan and Kenny Chesney (in multiple appearances) draw large crowds at the current NFL venue, Raymond James Stadium.

U2 played multiple shows at both stadiums but set the record for the highest attendance for a single event at the newer venue. The group performed for 72,688 fans at Raymond James Stadium on Oct. 9, 2009, during the massive "360" stadium tour. The concert produced a \$6.4 million gross that remained the highest there until it was surpassed by Taylor Swift's \$7.2 million haul in August 2018 during her "Reputation" stadium trek.

The Stones had the top attendance tally at the old stadium with a headcount of 63,415 on Nov. 18, 1989, during the group's "Steel Wheels" tour. They also had the highest gross at Tampa Stadium with a \$2.2 million take (\$3.9 million today) for a concert on Nov. 22, 1994, during the "Voodoo Lounge" tour.

Tampa Stadium's first reported show was on May 14, 1983, and featured a headlining performance by the Charlie Daniels Band with Aaron Tippin and Lee Ann Womack. Promoted by Pace Touring, it drew a crowd

of 30,500. The last concert reported at the venue (known as Houlihan's Stadium in its final three years) was the George Strait Country Music Festival in its first year on the road. The March 28, 1998, concert drew 50,790 fans with Tim McGraw, Faith Hill, Lee Ann Womack and Asleep at the Wheel also on the bill.

Strait brought his country music festival back the next year on March 27, 1999, and played the first concert reported at the new Raymond James Stadium just six months after it opened the previous September. McGraw returned for that tour as well, along with Kenny Chesney, the (then Dixie) Chicks and Jo Dee Messina among others. The performance was attended by a sellout crowd of 50,286.

Chesney's headlining dates at Raymond James Stadium were in 2006, 2011-13 and 2018. His overall ticket count from those five concerts was 246,777 for a combined gross of \$22.1 million. The most successful at the box office was his most recent show on April 21, 2018, with 55,292 fans present and a gross topping \$6.2 million.

Tropicana Field, the home of Major League Baseball's Tampa Bay Rays, located across the bay in St. Petersburg, hosted only a handful of concerts, according to the archives. The most successful at the box-office was a Feb. 24, 2000, performance by the Backstreet Boys who sold out the show with an attendance of 45,199 and a gross of \$2 million (\$3 million in

2021 dollars).

MidFlorida Credit Union Amphitheatre, Tampa's outdoor concert venue, arrived on the scene in the summer of 2004 and has 311 concerts stored in the box-office database. The overall number of tickets sold totals 3.7 million, and the total gross tops \$148.5 million. Country star Luke Bryan claims the top two attendance counts with 38,258 tickets sold for two shows in October 2013 and 36,179 at a two-show stand in the previous year. Country duo Florida Georgia Line has the top grosser with \$1,486,592 earned at a sold-out concert on Aug. 30, 2019.

The David A. Straz Jr. Center for the Performing Arts which opened in the summer of 1987 has reported box-office counts for all five of its performance venues, the largest of which is Carol Morsani Hall with a capacity of 2,610. It has logged 3,015 performances in the archives, with tickets totaling 5.6 million and a gross of \$324.7 million. Ferguson Hall, with a 1,042-seat capacity, has had 582 shows reported with 349,264 tickets sold and \$12.2 million in sales.

With a capacity of 312, Jaeb Theatre has a ticket count of 259,623 and a gross of \$7.9 million from 1,473 reported shows, while the 250-seat Teco Theatre has 63 shows in the archives with 9,217 tickets and a gross totaling \$147,457. The Straz Center's smallest venue, the Shimberg Playhouse with seating for 130, has reported 198 shows with a 25,400-ticket count and a \$742,365 gross. ■

—Bob Allen

COWBOY UP: Kenny Chesney plays Raymond James Stadium in 2012, one of his five headlining dates there.



LIVE! ROUNDUP

DUOS AND DANCERS: LIVE DATES IN DECEMBER

TWO TOURS DELIVERED 13 of the 20 highest-grossing concerts and events reported on the final Hot Tickets of 2020. Australian Christian music duo For King & Country hit the chart with eight concerts, and Americana artists Koe Wetzel and Read Southall scored with five.

For King & Country's shows came as part of its "A Drummer Boy" Christmas drive-in tour supporting a holiday-themed album released in late October. It was a continuation of the duo's post-shutdown touring efforts in U.S. cities, staged primarily in drive-ins since July. With the latest tally of December events, the group's overall box-office gross jumped to just over \$3 million from 47 reported shows since the summer.

During the last half of the year, more than 70,000 fans attended For King & Country's concerts.

Wetzel and Southall toured with an acoustic show during their December trek, which included socially distanced performances at venues in four Texas cities — Dallas, Corpus Christi, Houston and San Antonio — along with one in Oklahoma City. All five were sellouts and produced a gross of \$400,190 from 7,473 total tickets.

The only venue outside of the U.S. ranked on the chart is the Brolga Theatre in Maryborough, Australia (No. 18), which hosted a Dec. 8 performance of "A Celtic Christmas" by the Aussie-based A Taste of Ireland. The performance was one of six shows by the dance group set in Queensland during the 2020 holiday season. **■ — Bob Allen**

HOTTICKETS FEBRUARY 2021

Ranked by gross. All data based on figures supplied to Pollstar. Date range 12/1/20-12/31/20. Data updated as of Jan. 14.

RANK	GROSS	EVENT	VENUE	TICKETS SOLD	PROMOTER	DATE	SHOWS
1	\$146,115	For King & Country	The MET Church Parking Lot, Houston	2,604	In-house	Dec. 5	2
2	\$123,675	For King & Country	Ocala (Fla.) Drive-In	2,696	In-house	Dec. 12	2
3	\$119,315	For King & Country	H-E-B Center Parking Lot, Cedar Park, Texas	2,960	In-house	Dec. 6	2
4	\$90,640	Koe Wetzel & Read Southall	The Criterion, Oklahoma City	2,100	Patchwork Presents	Dec. 8	1
5	\$83,010	Koe Wetzel & Read Southall	Concrete Street Amphitheater, Corpus Christi, Texas	1,439	In-house	Dec. 10	1
6	\$79,185	Koe Wetzel & Read Southall	Cowboys Dancehall, San Antonio	1,556	In-house	Dec. 12	1
7	\$77,950	For King & Country	Silver Moon Drive-In, Lakeland, Fla.	1,720	In-house	Dec. 11	1
8	\$77,295	Koe Wetzel & Read Southall	South Side Ballroom, Dallas	1,508	B-Weiss Entertainment Group	Dec. 9	1
9	\$74,126	For King & Country	Reed Arena Parking Lot, College Station, Texas	1,416	In-house	Dec. 4	1
10	\$70,060	Koe Wetzel & Read Southall	White Oak Music Hall Lawn, Houston	870	In-house, Pegstar Concerts	Dec. 11	1
11	\$68,950	For King & Country	Joy Lan Drive-In, Dade City, Fla.	1,640	In-house	Dec. 10	1
12	\$68,225	For King & Country	Hertz Arena Parking Lot, Estero, Fla.	1,196	In-house	Dec. 13	1
13	\$44,400	Clutch	Union Transfer, Philadelphia	1,200	In-house	Dec. 31	1
14	\$41,851	For King & Country	Richard Borchard Fairgrounds, Robstown, Texas	1,016	In-house	Dec. 3	1
15	\$39,340	Maddie Poppe	Gallagher Bluedorn PAC, Cedar Falls, Iowa	890	In-house	Dec. 9-11	2
16	\$32,568	Jorma Kaukonen	The Vogel, Red Bank, N.J.	477	The Basie Presents	Dec. 12-13	4
17	\$32,500	Maddie Poppe	Paramount Theatre, Cedar Rapids, Iowa	1,161	In-house	Dec. 12	2
18	\$25,521	A Taste of Ireland	Brolga Theatre, Maryborough, Australia	539	Pace Live	Dec. 8	1
19	\$22,508	The Marcus King Band	3rd & Lindsley, Nashville, Tenn.	367	Backstage Live	Dec. 4-6	3
20	\$20,280	Best of the Eagles Tribute Band	The Vogel, Red Bank, N.J.	524	The Basie Presents	Dec. 26-27	4

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