

CELEBRITY PLAYGROUND

Prince held forth with an extravagant three-hour show at this year's Tiger Jam at the Mandalay Bay Events Center.

"Y'all ain't ready 4 me!"

PRINCE

Thoroughly Rocks Vegas

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On Saturday, May 29th, I viewed rock 'n' roll history. **Prince** put on one hell of a great show! And I don't just mean a concert—I mean an honest-to-goodness *show*!

Most musicians wait for their encore to release confetti and glitter from the ceiling. Not Prince! Oh, no! He had confetti dropping by the third song.

Another example: You've just released a new CD. Do you sing a bunch of songs from that CD in order to promote it, which annoys most fans? Not Prince. He knows what his fans want. He sang for *three hours*, offering many of the classic hits he knew his audience—including **Lynn** and **Bill Weidner** and **Jimmy Hopper**—wanted to hear, *plus* he sang a number of hits he'd penned for various ladies, including "A Love Bizarre" (**Sheila E.**), "I Feel for You" (**Chaka Khan**) and "Nothing Compares 2 U" (**Sinéad O'Connor**). Additionally, he covered hits by fellow funk 'n' soulsters **Outkast** ("The Way You Move") and **Sam and Dave** ("Soul Man"), the latter featuring tremendous gospel-style vocals by band member **Chance Howard**.

And when his band began to play the first chords of **Beyoncé's** "Crazy in Love," people simply went out of their minds! Then the music stopped. Prince looked out at his multitude of cheering admirers—who included such celebs as *21 Jump Street* alumni **Holly Robinson Peete** and **Richard Grieco**, **Hammer** (who'd auctioned off his white fur coat earlier that evening, raising \$8,000 for the **Tiger Woods** Foundation), *Everybody Loves Raymond's* **Ray Romano** and *The King of Queens's* **Kevin James**—stomped around, and yelled out, "I wanted that song, but I ain't got no booty!"

Then the music came back on and he stuck out his ass, shaking it to the rhythm and repeating, "I wanted that song, but I ain't got no booty!" The throngs of devoted fans just went nuts! As the screaming died down, he held up his hands, shook his head and said into his revolver-shaped microphone, "Las Vegas, I'm scared of all of y'all!" This only got the screaming started once more.

And talk about style! His Previously Perceived Purpleness was almost angelic in a corseted white (I'm guessing **Versace**) suit, white silk fedora and white *peau de soie* cha-cha boots with the heels covered in pavé Swarovski crystals. Even his stagehands were wearing white suits.

"Don't this beat playin' those stupid slot machines?" he taunted the crowd, receiving an uproarious round of applause. Then, with a nod toward good friend **Morris Day** of legendary funk band **The Time**, he flopped down on a wing-back chair, threw his legs up on an ottoman, and began to read a copy of *Rolling Stone*—with himself on the cover!

For a quick set of what I'll call "Prince Unplugged," the crowd was treated to the artist on a stool with merely a guitar and an amp. As he performed in the round, the stool swiveled 360 degrees to accommodate the crowd. In this set, Prince sang new material as well as some classic numbers, including "Little Red Corvette" and "Cream," which he did as a sing-along with the audience.

Said Prince in regard to the "U're so cool (Cool)..." lyric from "Cream," "When you sing this, Las Vegas, just look at yourself in the bathroom mirror—that's how I wrote it!" Then, with his band back on stage (as well as a dozen or so ladies from the audience), he announced, "Y'all ain't ready 4 me!" And a moment or two later, "I'm gonna stand over here 'til you get ready 4 me!"

Guess what? We got ready! And then he jammed some more. Finally, the encore consisted of three of the most gorgeous songs ever penned by this masterful balladeer: first, "The Beautiful Ones" (I mean, he cries in it, for Pete's sake!); then the aforementioned "Nothing Compares 2 U"; and finally the quintessence of all songs Prince, "Purple Rain."

—Michael Shulman