



MANILOW DOES “LAST” CONCERT IN NEWARK

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Barry Manilow is a musical icon dating back to the early 1970's. His first album, Barry Manilow I with the title cut “Could it be Magic” did not propel him to stardom. His second album with the song Mandy as the title cut, did. His career has taken him all over the world to numerous countries. He has played in London a number of times and even recorded a live in Britain album.

His showmanship is as natural to him as breathing is. He doesn't just talk to the audience. He talks with them. He relaxes them into being able to enjoy the show on a different level than just him singing. He involves them in the entirety of the concert. Since 1980, I have seen over a dozen of his shows in a variety of venues. Each time I leave with my voice raspy from the cheering, singing laughing and yelling. He has his own brand of comedy which he injects into his conversations with the audience. In one of his concerts, he talks with the people in what he calls the nosebleed section, the very top of the arena, he says, “How are you doing up there in the nosebleed section of the joint? Yeah, to you I must look like a singing, dancing nose.” This show was no different.



Background information is courtesy of Wikipedia:

For those who don't know some his background Barry Manilow was born Barry Alan Pincus on June 17, 1943, in the Brooklyn borough of New York City.^[10] He is the son of Harold Kelliher, a truck driver of Irish descent, and Edna Manilow. Barry's mother made his father change his name to Pincus, the name of a Jewish uncle of his father from the 1800s.^{[11][12][13]} Barry's parents divorced when he was a baby, and his mother's family allowed no further contact between Barry and his father.^[13] Barry's maternal grandparents were Russian Jewish immigrants, and his paternal grandfather was Jewish, while his grandmother was a Catholic of Irish descent.^[14] His Irish roots trace back to Limerick, Ireland.^[15] Barry's grandfather had his surname changed to Manilow few weeks before Barry's bar mitzvah.^[13]

Manilow has recorded and released 51 Top 40 singles on the Adult Contemporary Chart, including 13 that hit number one, 28 that appeared within the top ten, and 36 that

reached the top twenty. He has released 13 platinum and six multi-platinum albums.^[2] Although not a favorite artist of musi critics,^[3] Manilow has been praised by his peers in the recording industry. In the 1970s, Frank Sinatra predicted: "He's next."^[4]

Boy was Sinatra right.

To me, one of the most fun medleys he has done in his concerts, that brings back childhood memories is what he calls his VSM (Very Strange Medley) for those who are unfamiliar with this it is a bunch of commercials that he wrote and performed ranging from McDonalds ‘You Deserve a break today’ to Doctor Pepper and ‘I am stuck on Band Aid’. He also included ‘Like a good neighbor, State Farm is there’ in that mix. He did not do this in this show.

Many times, bands and musicians say that their current tour is their last one. Many times, they end up doing another one for whatever the reason. This tour of Manilow's is being promoted as his last tour. We would hope that this will not be his last, but at 83 that is probably a pipe dream for all of his fans.

On June 26, 2026, I attended the 12th concert of his current final tour which is encompassing at least 71 performing dates between the start of the tour from at least April 13, 2026, (according to what is written on a shirt I bought) in Belmont NY at the UBS Arena to at least January 21, 2027, in Orlando Florida plus a not yet confirmed date in Charlotte NC. At 83 this man is amazing. Although age has slowed him down a little, he can still move on that stage like he was in his 30's.

The concert opened with a musical comedian Dennis Blair who had the sold-out crowd laughing and singing along with his comedic look at music through the 1960's to today.



Manilow came out on the stage at around 8:00 to It's a Miracle.

https://youtube.com/shorts/FcKPI_0qH4M?feature=share

The show lasted 90 minutes without a real intermission. He did leave the stage a couple

of times for costume changes and during those times he had videos playing of past performances and during one he came back out and had him today on the screen with him in 1975 doing the Mandy/Could it be Magic medley. To see him when he was next to him today at 83 was amazing.

He paid homage to his grandfather who saw musical potential in him and had brought him to a voice recording place in Manhattan to try to get him to sing. The first time was for a Happy Birthday wish for one of his cousins. He put this recording into his first album He also told a story of one of his early concerts at Carnegie Hall when his grandfather stood as he came out and the rest of the audience did the same and when they finally down his grandfather remained standing and applauding. He said, this was his first standing ovation. He then performed “This One's For You” which he dedicated to his grandfather.

Whereas he loves his ballads, he also did a lot of faster paced songs in his career. One of them was “I'm Your Man” off the Manilow LP (Long Play album – for all of you in the streaming generation who have possibly never seen an LP – unless your parents have them). In this song he danced back and forth across the stage with the energy of a person in their 20's.

<https://youtube.com/shorts/jq9t-vxjW8?feature=share>

Some of the other songs he did included, “Somewhere in the Night”, and “I Write the Songs” – a song which he won a Grammy Award for, which was written by Bruce Johnston of the Beach Boys.

<https://youtube.com/shorts/46OyCiKKceg?feature=share>

He even did a prompted sing along while following the bouncing smile emoji on the screen of “Cant smile without you”. Not that the audience needed prompting to sing along. They were singing along very loudly with every song he did.

One thing he did which touched everyone's heart was when he highlighted music teacher from a school in Newark who has been a major influence on music education to his students.

He did a segment on his relationship with Clive Davis, who bought Bell Records label and renamed it Arista Records and the influence Davis had on him and his career. Davis passed away recently.

One of the videos he showed was Clive Davis speaking with Mac Davis introducing him back in 1975 as an up-and-coming singer/songwriter. You could hear the love he had for the man in his voice and that he is going to be missed by all who knew him.

Could it be Magic, one of his most famous ballads he did as a combination of the ballad and a fast-paced dance number that was inspired by a Donna Summer dance version of the song.

One of the most amazing things he and his backup singers did was an a cappella version of Tchaikovsky's 1812 Overture in which they did the instrumental. It was totally amazing and fantastic.



He did some songs from other artists like Frankie Valli and the Four Seasons, "Can't take my eyes off of you"

The final song, which everyone was expecting him to do was Copacabana. No one wanted it to end. They kept cheering and hoping he would come back out for one more encore. Unfortunately for the crowd, it didn't materialize.

<https://youtube.com/shorts/AfUDn1HugQA?feature=share>

You could hear the emotion in his voice as the concert drew to a close. He is so grateful to the fans for following him and loving him and his music over all the years.

I was always teased by my friends because I liked Manilow's music. The thing is, I identify with a lot of his songs, especially the ballads. Even today, sometimes I get teary eyed when I hear some of them. One of my favorite albums of his is "At the Mayflower". It has that mix of ballad and dance music with songs like "They Dance" along with the emotional tug at your heart in songs like "I Miss you."

Manilow is a permanent presence in the music industry. He is a permanent presence in the hearts of all of his longtime fans and probably in the hearts of the young people who were there at the concert. His music and style will always have a place in the annals of American Music. I highly recommend that any fan of his finds a way to get to see him this one last time. For those who can't see the real McCoy, you might want to look up a band called Daybreak, a Barry Manilow Tribute band. It's as close as you can come to seeing Barry in person.

<https://youtu.be/4eL1WTfKORg>

