

# The Des Moines Register



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<http://www.desmoinesregister.com/story/entertainment/music/2016/08/22/lady-antebellum-closes-grandstand-night-remember/89084664/>

Star country trio Lady Antebellum closed the Grandstand festivities at the 2016 Iowa State Fair on Sunday night with a set full of songs spanning the band's nearly decade-deep discography.

Performing for 90 minutes — similar set times to KISS and Steven Tyler on Friday and Saturday nights — the eight-time Grammy Award-winning group delivered songs such as “Downtown,” “Just A Kiss,” “I Run To You,” “Lookin' For A Good Time” and more. And, from start to finish, Lady Antebellum — comprised of vocalist Hillary Scott, vocalist and guitarist Charles Kelley and guitarist and backing vocalist Dave Haywood — showed appreciation for the crowd of 6,056 who took to the Grandstand for the final night of the fair.

“This place is honestly pretty special for us,” Haywood said during a break in the set. The band last played the Iowa State Fair in 2014. “Thanks for showing back up for Lady Antebellum.”

Many moments during the set came off as candid, delivered with a certain charm that radiated among the band members on stage. One particularly memorable scene came when Kelley, Scott and Haywood decided to perform as “just the three” of them, without the rest of the live band. It’s “how the band started,” Scott told the crowd.

While addressing the crowd during this stripped-down portion of the set, Kelley said he wanted to “go off script” and asked Haywood to switch guitars, in hopes of playing a different song than what was planned. During the switch, Kelley spelled out the band’s biggest influences to the crowd: Fleetwood Mac, The Eagles, Reba McEntire, George Strait and Alabama.

“We’ve gone through so much, but there’s still so much we want to say,” Kelley said.

Following this moment of charm, he and his counterparts led the trio — and the chorus of thousands in the stands — through a moving acoustic cover of Fleetwood Mac’s “Landslide.” It wouldn’t be the band’s only cover of the night. The group also put the Lady A twist on Justin Timberlake hit “Can’t Stop The Feeling” and the Shania Twain classic “Any Man Of Mine” during the set.

The show was opened by Kelsea Ballerini (who returned to the stage during Lady Antebellum’s set to join the fun on the “Any Man Of Mine” cover). An up-and-coming country-meets-pop star in her own right, Ballerini gets an A+ for crowd participation.

During her nearly 45-minute set, she spent her time between songs interacting with the audience, telling the stories behind the songs and sharing the overarching messages behind the music. She even jumped into the crowd to take selfies at one point.

Ballerini performed tracks off her debut record, “The First Time,” including “Peter Pan,” “Dibs” and “Yeah Boy.”

Lady Antebellum, which mentioned during the set that a new record is in the works, performed the 2014 hit “Bartender” and energetic number “Love Don’t Live Here” before leaving the stage. The group returned to deliver a two-song encore featuring 2009 emotional hit “Need You Now,” which drew arguably the strongest reaction from the crowd all night, and the 2011 song “We Owned The Night.”

“Iowa State Fair,” Scott said to the crowd during the encore. “This has been a night to remember.”

Matthew Leimkuehler reports on music for The Des Moines Register, Datebook and Juice. Miss a show at the Grandstand this year? He covered everything from KISS to Meghan Trainor at the 2016 Iowa State Fair. You can reach him at [mleimkuehler@dmreg.com](mailto:mleimkuehler@dmreg.com), via Twitter [@mattleimkuehler](https://twitter.com/mattleimkuehler) or by phone at 515-284-8358.