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New York / Arts & Entertainment / Music

## Marty Stuart's 'Superlative' set at Lincoln Center

**Jim Bessman**, Manhattan Local Music Examiner  
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Marty Stuart & His Fabulous Superlatives: From left, Stuart, Harry Stinson, Paul Martin and Kenny Vaughan.  
**Credits:** Teri Landi



Video: Marty Stuart's "Tempted"

Rating for Marty Stuart & His Fabulous Superlatives:  
★★★★★

### Related Topics

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To call your group Fabulous Superlatives risks overkill, but in [Marty Stuart's](#) case it's an understatement. Stuart's Fabulous Superlatives were in fact super-superlative at Lincoln Center's Damrosch Park Bandshell Saturday night as they capped the first day of the 28th annual *Roots of American Music Festival*.

Guitarist/mandolinist Stuart and his band (guitarist Kenny Vaughan, bassist Paul Martin and drummer Harry Stinson) performed his big country hits "The Whiskey Ain't Workin'," "Tempted" and "Hillbilly Rock," along with gospel tunes like an acoustic version of Bill Monroe's "I'm Working On A Building," for which Stinson came out from behind the drums to sing lead. An extraordinary country guitarist, Vaughan also got a solo turn on his signature "Country Music Got A Hold On Me."

The Superlatives dazzled superbly on instrumentals, too, but the show's high point centered on Johnny Cash songs--Cash having been one of Stuart's two employers, following a bluegrass stint with Flatt & Scruggs that Stuart commenced at age 14.

Stuart saluted Cash's late bass player [Marshall Grant](#), who died a week ago, then did a version of Cash's tribute to guitarist Luther Perkins, Grant's partner in Cash's original backup, the Tennessee Two. He played "Luther Played The Boogie" straight halfway, then converted it to a Vaughan tribute.

He then brought out a vintage guitar on which Cash played "I Walk The Line," which Stuart recently verified and acquired. Playing it for the first time in public since then ("It's been under a bed in Chattanooga Tennessee since 1959 as far as I can figure," he said), he delivered two key cuts from his favorite album *At Folsom Prison*, "I Still Miss Someone" and "Dark As A Dungeon."

Cash was a big part of the preceding sets, too. Reigning International Bluegrass Music Awards (IBMA) Entertainer and Vocal Group of the Year winners [Dailey & Vincent](#) came fresh from the preceding week's inaugural *Johnny Cash Music Fest* in Jonesboro, Ark. (where Grant was stricken and died).

Jamie Dailey and Darrin Vincent performed in duo, gospel quartet (with mandolinist Jeff Parker and guitarist Christian Davis) and full seven-piece band formations (now including former Cherryholmes fiddler B.J. Cherryholmes), with its quartet version of "When The Roll Is Called Up Yonder," a high point at the Cash festival, stunning the crowd here as well. Also performed were songs from Dailey & Vincent's IBMA Album of the Year *Dailey & Vincent Sing The Statler Brothers* (the classic "Flowers On The Wall" and the beautiful "Elizabeth"), the Statlers, of course, having been a major part of the touring *Johnny Cash Show*.

Parker, meanwhile, turned in a near-perfect Conway Twitty on that inimitable country star's signature "Hello Darlin'," Twitty having been briefly signed to Sun Records--Cash's first label home. The nostalgic "Tribute To Sun Records" set that was sandwiched in between Dailey & Vincent and Stuart starred rockabilly legends Sonny Burgess & the Legendary Pacers, a group that's been together in one form or other since forming in Newport, Ark., in 1955, that scored five Sun singles. After their set they backed the lesser known Sun rockabilly stars Hayden Thompson and Rudy "Tutti" Grayzell.

Singer-songwriter-producer [Cowboy Jack Clement](#), who was a huge part of Sun and Cash's later career, followed his stellar *April show at Joe's Pub* with another great set here. Afterwards, he said that his landmark house in Nashville, which recently burned down, was well on its way to being rebuilt.

A Sun Records Oral Histories symposium took place earlier in the day along with performances on the Lincoln Center Plazas by Sid Selvedge & Sons of Mud Boy, Abigail Washburn, and Ebony Hillbillies. The *Roots of American Music Festival* then concluded yesterday with Steve Cropper and Friends: Tribute to the 5 Royales, with Bettye Lavette, Ellis Hooks and Dylan LeBlanc, and sets from The Bar-Kays, North Mississippi Allstars Duo and Big Sam's Funky Nation.


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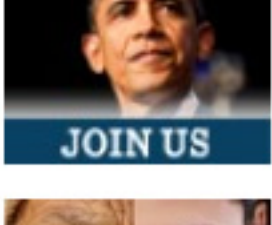
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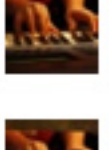
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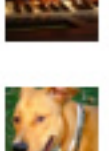
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