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## Electric Zoo finalizes line-up, organizers speak

The New York festival has added Heidi, Guy Gerber, Steve Angello and more.

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The **Electric Zoo Festival** has finalized its line-up for its debut bow in New York.

**Heidi, Guy Gerber, Steve Angello, ATB, Axwell and Victor Calderone** were among the names announced this week to fill out the already bulging slate of performers which include **Richie Hawtin, Luciano, Steve Bug, LCD Soundsystem's James Murphy** and **Pat Mahoney, James Holden, Armin Van Buuren, David Guetta, Lindstrom, Prins Thomas, Ben Watt, François K, Cassy, Seth Troxler, Mark Ernestus of Rhythm & Sound** and many, many more.

The festival will hopefully be the first of many for Made Event duo Mike Bindra and Laura De Palma, the organizers of the event. We caught up with them earlier this week to chat about putting the festival together, why they wanted to put one after other recent festivals in New York have failed and what we can expect on Labor Day at Randall's Island.

**What was the impetus behind doing a festival in New York? Why did you decide now was the time?**

**LDP:** This is something we've been thinking about and planning on for a number of years. It was just a matter of being ready for it ourselves as a company and finding a venue that we were really excited about.

**Why did you choose Randall's Island?**

**LDP:** It's an amazing location. It's beautiful, there's been a lot of money poured into it. It's easy to get to. And it's basically in Manhattan.

**Were there any other sites that you were looking at, or was Randall's Island always the first choice?**

**MB:** Randall's Island was a venue that we had actually been looking at for many years. We met with them four or five years ago, but at that time another big promoter had the exclusive rights. When that opened up this year, we seized on the opportunity. But we were considering other venues if that one didn't become available as well. Really, the struggle in New York to do a good outdoor festival is to find a suitable venue that's easily accessible. And one that wasn't all paved over. We wanted something that was grassy, and had trees, as opposed to standing on concrete.

**To make it feel more like a European festival—except in New York.**

**LDP:** Exactly. And it will have New York flavor. You'll definitely know you're in New York, but there will also be grass.

**MB:** New York's take on a European festival.

**Obviously there's been some New York festivals in the past few years. Larry Tee's thing, Minitek. What have you learned from watching those happen?**

**MB:** Well, I think this is definitely on a whole different level. This is a big-budget festival. And we're using the same professionals in the industry that do big rock concerts and big rock festivals. We're trying to elevate the whole thing to the same level that we've seen it reach elsewhere in the world, which is top-tier as far as quality of production and experience.

**LDP:** As a company, we make decisions based on our own thoughts and how we learn as we go. As a general rule, we don't really look to the "competition."



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**What is your philosophy behind the bookings for Electric Zoo?  
There seems to be a wide-range of underground and overground acts.**

**MB:** Something for everyone, I think, would sum it up. I think we wanted to represent the whole spectrum of electronic music as best as we could. You're always going to miss out on some sub-genres or some artists but we did the best we could in year one to represent as wide of a range as

possible.

**LDP:** Definitely. We want to appeal to everyone. As Mike was saying, we obviously can't do every single sub-genre the first time out, but we want to expand on that theme from year-to-year.

**You're saying year-to-year. You're envisioning the Electric Zoo Festival to be an ongoing thing? Every year, Labor Day weekend, New York City: Electric Zoo.**

**LDP:** Yes. We hope so!

**What can you tell us about the festival set-up as far as stages go? There are four stages, correct? Will those generally be set up by genre primarily?**

**MB:** Yes, there will be four. We're not trying to be too rigid about it genre-wise, though, because what's interesting to us—and for the scene—is cross-pollination and crossover. Which we've seen a lot of, I think, with electro, house and techno and certain artists that are doing multiple sub-genres within electronic music nowadays, which we think is a really healthy sign.

There will be an open-air main stage, which will represent a cross-section and obviously end with the big headliners. There will be three other tented environments which will reach from the smaller side (1,000 – 1,500) all the way up to a really large tent.

**Who are you personally most excited about seeing?**

**LDP:** All of them, Todd! *[laughter]*

**MB:** I think what we're most excited about seeing personally is seeing this thing getting pulled off the way that we envision it. And establishing something new in this country. A new festival in the States and, in the Northeast which we don't have. There's Ultra, Detroit and obviously the scene out West has been very healthy for years, so we're excited to hopefully carry the torch for New York and the Northeast.

**Was there anything else you wanted to add about the festival?**

**MB:** Going back to what you asked us before about how we might be different from other festivals: Our whole focus is trying to deliver a quality experience on every level. From the types of concessions to the types of activities that will be available on site for people that perhaps don't feel like listening to music at the moment—or need a break—to the visuals and the audio. We're really striving to make a statement with this festival.

**LDP:** Exactly. And how we're imagining it—because it is such a beautiful site—is that people will come the whole day, and enjoy the entire experience. That's why we've thought about details like people that might want a break from the music.

**MB:** And I think some people will be surprised when they see the main stage line-ups. We've got some pretty underground talent playing on the main stage early in the day, more sort of down-tempo stuff. The idea being that you can come, spread out a blanket for the afternoon and chill out and enjoy some really quality music hopefully in the sun before it becomes the big full-on spectacle as night falls.



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