East End rocker Nancy Atlas and her Montauk neighbor Chad Smith of the Red Hot Chili Peppers sold out Bay Street Theatre for the first concert in the Nancy Atlas Fireside Sessions in Sag Harbor on the first Friday in January, and not even Hercules could keep the faithful from trekking out for the show.

Some ticketless music fans looking for seats at the box office right before the big event were sent back out into the night, vowing to buy tickets to the rest of the series in advance, but in typical small-town, off-season fashion, most of those turned away came back in, happily having found attendees with spare tickets due to “no-show” friends still too buried in the snow to make it past the Shinnecock Canal. (For those who could not make it but purchased tickets that were not used by others, Nancy and Bay Street have offered that those tickets may be turned in for one of the future Fireside Sessions shows, as long as ticket holders contact the box office in advance.)

Opening the set dressed in costumes they’d pillaged from Bay Street’s wardrobe—Nancy in fur jacket and a rakish hat with feather, and Chad in a jester’s hat and coat—the two close friends soon got down to the business of blowing the roof off the theater with a killer version of “Sympathy for the Devil.” They set a hard-rocking tone that would take them through a few Atlas originals (“Black and Blue,” “Cut and Run,” “King City”) as well as a few of Chad’s favorite covers, including Rod Stewart’s “Stay with Me” and The Beatles’ “Don’t Let Me Down.” Along with helping sell out Bay Street during a blizzard, it appeared that the hard-pounding Smith also broke his drum head at one point, but that didn’t deter the epic encore, a Led Zeppelin mash-up that had half the audience on the floor dancing and the other half up on their feet, singing along.

Upcoming Fireside Sessions shows will include more Atlas friends and top notch musicians, such as Andy Aledort, Danny Kean, Randi Fishenfeld and Brian Mitchell, as the series
continues every Friday in January and select Fridays in February. For more info and to buy tickets, visit baystreet.org.

Nancy Atlas and Chad Smith, Photo: Daniel Gonzalez

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