

Missed the Taylor Swift tour? New Hampshire may have the Eras experience you need.

“June (Taylor’s Version)” at Canobie Lake Park has gone viral on TikTok for her uncanny resemblance to Swift and lively performances

By Arushi Jacob. Published August 8, 2024.

<https://www.bostonglobe.com/2024/08/08/arts/new-hampshire-eras-tour-taylor-swift-canobie>

For those unable to get tickets to Taylor Swift’s viral Eras Tour, a quick trip to Canobie Lake Park in Salem, N.H., may be the answer to your Swift fix. Included in your entry ticket, the theme park features a “Tribute to Taylor” series until Sept 2, with three daily shows of a roughly 30-minute performance by a Swift lookalike to some of Taylor’s greatest hits, completely with backup dancers and multiple costume changes.

The aforementioned Swift impersonator, who simply refers to herself as “June (Taylor’s Version)” due to the recent increase in media attention, is the star of this year’s tribute series, a dead ringer for Swift with long, straight blonde hair cut into bangs, blue contacts rimmed by sharp flicks of black eyeliner, and red lipstick. The 37-year-old New England native has gone viral on TikTok, but she doesn’t consider herself primarily a performer.

A writer and business owner, June worked primarily with fantasy cosplay on TikTok before her stint playing Taylor Swift.

“I’m a huge Swiftie myself, so I’ll take Taylor-inspired looks and kind of turn them into fantasy-themed things, I cross over content between SwiftTok and fantasy TikTok,” June said. “I take inspiration from [her aesthetics], but make it my own, which eventually transitioned into me performing as a tribute.”

Before Canobie Lake, June was new to the world of Taylor impersonators, performing as Swift on one-off occasions, such as birthdays and corporate events for around six months. Connected by a mutual producer contact, June was introduced to Matt Lewis, a Canobie Lake producer, and told they were “looking for a Taylor” for the summer. The Eras Tour (June’s Version) is part of Canobie Lake’s history of tribute artist performances, including a “Tribute to Freddie Mercury” series in 2023 and an Elvis series for a week this August.

Describing it as a “wonderful partnership,” June onboarded as a creative consultant of sorts, advising the team on all things Swift-related like choosing high-energy, well-known songs to put on the tracklist.

Ahead of the show, June trained her vocals for about three months,; her prior singing experience was limited to grade school and high school musical theater. The rest of the preparation process was much quicker.

“I recorded my backing tracks and supporting vocals in about two days, and then I learned the choreography in another two or three days,” June said, explaining that they proceeded with tech rehearsals and then went on to perform.

The show starts similarly to the real Eras Tour, according to fans in the audience, even playing “Applause” by Lady Gaga before June goes onstage, the same track used by Swift before a countdown clock appears on screen. In addition to the clock, Canobie Lake features a montage of different videos of Taylor Swift playing on their Midway Stage, before June kicks off with “Miss Americana and the Heartbreak Prince,” another nod to the Eras Tour.

“It was basically the exact same thing,” said Anna McCabe, a 29-year-old musician from Lawrence, who has seen the real Swift in concert thrice. She stated that aside from some deviations in the tracklist, June sounded “exactly like [Swift].”

For those of you confused by the copyright laws that apply to tribute concerts (and understandably so), Canobie’s brand manager Chris Nicoli explained that the park covers its bases through a group of copyright licenses, ASCAP, BMI, and SESAC.

“Covering songs during a live performance, a band or an artist can do that based on blanket licenses that the venue owners get from the performance rights organization,” said Alexandra Roberts, a professor of law and media at Northeastern University.

Where things tend to get a little trickier is the marketing of said tribute artists, if they’re promoted under false pretenses.

“There have been some disputes recently, like when a tribute band uses a name that’s too similar to the band’s name because it might create consumer confusion,” said Roberts. A recent example she offered took place this March with an “Earth, Wind and Fire” tribute band that called itself “Earth, Wind and Fire Legacy Reunion”. “There were examples of people posting online and saying, that they thought it was the real band, or that they went to the concert and were so disappointed, and wanted their money back.”

Additionally, she explained, the tribute band was using deceptively similar logos, art, and language on the website and tickets, and claimed to include legacy band members, who turned out to be some musicians who had performed with the real band a few times, not actual members of the band.

There’s no cause for confusion with Canobie Lake’s Tribute to Taylor, as both management and June make it exceedingly clear to audiences that the woman on stage is not Taylor Swift, and she’s not pretending to be. While inspired by some of Swift’s iconic moves, like arching her back when hitting a high note, June makes sure not to pre-choreograph every move she makes on stage.

“You pick out a couple key components and then go from there,” she said. “If I was trying to do everything exactly like her all the time, it might feel forced and it wouldn’t feel as organic.”

Whatever she’s doing is clearly working, as she continues to draw the crowds in throughout the summer.

“It really did give me that same feeling of excitement that you have going into a concert,” said Alexa DeMasse, a Massachusetts resident who has been to the tribute show five times thanks to her Canobie Lake season pass. DeMasse said the crowd has been getting bigger and more excited with every performance, adding she was going to start bringing friendship bracelets to trade at the shows, a fan-favorite tradition at Swift’s concerts.

For fans like DeMasse who were unable to see Swift in concert, whether due to issues with Ticketmaster or the exorbitant prices (BusinessInsider places them at roughly \$2,000 each), tribute concerts are a great way to enjoy Swift’s music and the atmosphere.

June compares her performances to acting, and her role is the most famous musical artist in the world right now. She explained that it’s similar to any sort of community theater that pays homage to Broadway shows, saying . She said, “they want to take some excerpts from the show, put it on locally, and make it accessible to the community.”

“That’s kind of what we’re doing here,” June continued. “It’s all in good faith and it’s all in good fun.”

TRIBUTE TO TAYLOR

At Canobie Lake Park, 85 North Policy St. Until Sept 2, various timingtimes. General admission tickets to the park begin at \$45. canobie.com