



**Drake,
J. Cole host a
high-energy
singalong at
PPG Paints**

Post-Gazette

Drake at PPG Paints Arena on Friday.

ALL A BLUR OF HITS

By Scott Mervis
Pittsburgh Post-Gazette

Review

Drake is a pretty chill cat, right? Under most circumstances, yeah, but not so much when he's in the middle of 20,000 people going wild over every word. "Pittsburgh, you are turned from the bottom to the top," he told the Friday night crowd at PPG Paints Arena,

where the Canadian rap star hadn't set foot in eight years. The man born Aubrey Drake Graham draws his fans into a full audience-participation event, just like one of those emo shows, circa early 2000s. He led the crowd in a mass singalong on virtually every song. Actually, snippets

of songs is more like it, and there were lots of them, flying by in blur. It was the seventh date and fourth city of the It's All a Blur: Big As the What? Tour, the '24 version of a run that began last July with Savage 21 and now features Drake's longtime friend and collaborator, J. Cole. After a high-energy warmup from Lil Durk, the lights went out again and it was ESPN's Stephen A. Smith prepping

us for the magnificent opening of a marching band dancing through the crowd blasting "Trophies." Drizzy stepped out of a skit, knocked down a locker room wall and there he was on the B stage under a giant statue of late fashion designer Virgil Abloh, greeting us with "Virginia Beach," the lead track on his latest album, "For All
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Shervin Lainez

Rock duo They Might Be Giants.

They Might Be Giants to open tour at Mr. Smalls in May

By Scott Mervis
Pittsburgh Post-Gazette

Indie-rock icons They Might Be Giants will open their The Big Show US Tour with a three-night stand at Mr. Smalls in Millvale, running May 9-11.

The veteran Brooklyn duo led by

John Flansburgh and John Linnell will perform different sets each night, ranging from the earliest days of Dial-A-Song to their platinum album "Flood" to their Grammy-nominated album "BOOK."

For ticket info, go to theymightbegiants.com/shows.

Epilepsy Association's Mardi Gras raises \$350,000

SEEN
PATRICIA SHERIDAN

Jim McQuade, president and CEO of Dollar Bank, reigned over the Epilepsy Association of Western and Central PA's Mardi Gras celebration as king of Mardi Gras at the Westin Convention Center, Tuesday.

The 30th anniversary gala had many former kings and queens in attendance, including Latasha and Charlie Batch —last year's reigning couple — who did the honor of crowning the new king.

"It is an incredible honor to be associated with an organization that does so much for so many people and it really is humbling," said McQuade.

This was only the second time McQuade and his wife, Lisa, had been to the Mardi Gras gala.

"Mr. McQuade has just been fantastic in terms of acknowledging epilepsy and talking about epilepsy and the services and programs we provide," noted EAWCP president and CEO



John Colombo/For the Post-Gazette

Mardi Gras king Jim McQuade sits on his throne at the Epilepsy Association of Western and Central PA's annual Mardi Gras Gala on Feb. 13 at the Westin Convention Center Hotel, Downtown.

Peggy Beem Jelley.

The Fat Tuesday bash was chaired by Deb Rice Johnson (with former Mardi Gras king Blair) and co-chairs Eric Boughner and David Hall. KDKA-TV's Bob Pom-

peani (with Lisa) repeated his role as the evening's emcee, welcoming all to the benefit.

Each year, the committee with

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