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BREAKING

Lawsuits Pile Up After NYC's Electric Zoo Music Festival Ends In Overcrowding And Canceled Acts

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TOPLINE The lawsuits against the organizers of last month's Electric Zoo music festival are continuing to pile up, after the festival canceled headline performances, turned away ticket holders and caused overcrowding on New York City's Randall's Island that one plaintiff [said](#) caused him to "fear for his life."



People attend the second day of the Electric Zoo Festival as it resumes on the second day after ... [+] ANADOLU AGENCY VIA GETTY IMAGES

KEY FACTS

- A new lawsuit against entertainment company Avant Gardner was recently filed by ticket buyers in New York State court last week, marking at least the fourth such action filed in the month since the festival broke down due to what one lawsuit called the “negligence and avarice” of organizers.
- The [latest lawsuit](#) accuses Avant Gardner, who hosted the festival in September for the second time this year after buying it from Made Event for \$15 million, of false advertising and breach of contract at the event it called “nothing short of an absolute fiasco.”
- Five festival-goers are listed as plaintiffs—Billy Ting, Duoc Vo, Garry Huang, Jeffrey Wang and Joshua Chin—but the lawsuit aims to represent all ticket holders who experienced a “late start and poor staffing... long lines, massive overcrowding and a literal stampede of people when it was discovered that the organizers oversold tickets” as a class-action case.

- The lawsuits joins [others](#) that were filed within two weeks of the show by plaintiffs Nicole Brockmole and Lauren Bair, who are seeking damages on “behalf of all affected patrons” who endured “a nightmare” after they bought tickets for the festival but couldn't get in.
- Another lawsuit by a Connecticut man says the resulting stampede caused him to “fear for his life” as overcrowding reached dangerous levels, according to [Billboard](#).

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- All four of the court filings seek to represent hundreds or thousands of fans, and accuse Avant Gardner of misleading buyers and failing to prevent the predictable problems.



A woman with glowing cloak dances on the second day of the Electric Zoo Festival on September 03, ... [+] ANADOLU AGENCY VIA GETTY IMAGES

CONTRA

Representatives for the organizer did not immediately respond to *Forbes'* request for comment Tuesday but said in a [statement](#) last month "while the vast majority of Electric Zoo attendees had a great experience, our job is to ensure that everyone has a phenomenal experience. We will work closely with our partners to review the planning and execution of the event from start to finish."

KEY BACKGROUND

Electric Zoo is the biggest electronic dance music festival in New York and annually brings 100,000 people to Randall's Island over Labor Day weekend. The first day of the festival, which was set to feature big names like The Chainsmokers and Kx5, was canceled just hours before the expected start time because local parks and recreation officials wouldn't issue permits for the event. The festival [first said](#) the cancellation was due to "global supply chain disruptions" that meant the main stage couldn't be constructed in time for day one, but *Billboard* [later reported](#) it was due to vendor

nonpayment, citing unnamed industry sources. The main stage was never completely finished, and problems on day two included hours-long lines to pick up tickets and a two-hour delay in the start time. On the third day, festival organizers [started denying entry](#) to anyone who arrived after 6:30 p.m. because the event had reached capacity. Ticket holders then angrily rushed the gates, NBC News [reported](#). Festival organizers promised a full refund to those who were turned away.

CRUCIAL QUOTE

“It’s unfortunate that the organizers wanted to turn our city into a zoo, and we were not going to allow that to happen,” New York City Mayor Eric Adams [said](#) after the festival.

BIG NUMBER

7,000. That’s how many extra tickets were sold for the 2023 Electric Zoo festival, [according to](#) the New York City Police Department.

TANGENT

Three New York police officers [were indicted](#) in May after two of them were accused of stealing nearly \$3,000 worth of champagne from a V.I.P. area of the 2022 Electric Zoo festival. A third was accused of not stopping the theft. Jonathan Gonzalez, Wojciech Czech and Warren Golden are all facing criminal charges for allegedly stealing Armand de Brignac—“Ace of Spades”—brand Champagne when the people who ordered it stepped away. The officers allegedly put two bottles in a backpack and were seen by one of the people who’d ordered it, who confronted them in front of a security officer. Czech and Gonzalez are both charged with fourth-degree grand larceny and fourth-degree criminal possession of stolen property. Gonzalez is also charged with official misconduct. They both were [suspended](#) from police duty and pleaded not guilty

to the charges, which [bring](#) up to four years in prison if convicted. Golden is charged with official misconduct, a misdemeanor.

FURTHER READING

[After Messy 2023 Electric Zoo, Lawsuits Are Piling Up For Owner Avant Gardner](#) (*Billboard*)

[Electric Zoo attendees frustrated by chaos at disorganized three-day festival](#) (NBC News)

[Fyre Fest II? Billy McFarland Claims First Batch Of Tickets Sold Out With No Lineup In Place](#) (*Forbes*)

[Burning Man: 1 Dead As Flooding Strands Thousands At Nevada Desert Festival](#) (*Forbes*)

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