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Bryan Adams plays 'Bare Bones' solo acoustic show Nov. 2 at Embassy Theatre

By James Grant of The News-Sentinel
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Bryan Adams, who performs in concert Wednesday night at the Embassy Theatre, is one of Canada's most successful musical exports.

As the writer and performer of such classic rock staples as "Cuts Like a Knife," "Heaven," "Summer of '69" and "Run to You," as well as his biggest hit, "(Everything I Do) I Do It for You" from the movie "Robin Hood: Prince of Thieves," Adams has sold millions of albums and amassed an incredible string of 22 Top 40 hits on Billboard Magazine's Hot 100.

With a career that spans over 30 years, Adams has not only cultivated a large fan base, he has also received critical acceptance with numerous Grammy award nominations (winning one) as well as multiple Golden Globe and Academy Award nominations for his songwriting contributions to films.

In celebration of his storied career, Adams has taken to the road with an all acoustic show that he says is a retrospective of the last 30 years of music he's been writing and recording.

Solo show

The tour is called Bare Bones, which is also the name of his latest CD, and consists of him alone onstage without a backup band except for some occasional piano accompaniment provided by his keyboard player, Gary Breit.

Adams says this acoustic format gives him the freedom to add and subtract songs to his set list easily, and he is keen to listen to fans requests to add certain songs — provided he has enough lead time to remember how to play a specific request.

"I recently joined Twitter, and that's quite interesting because people before the show, a day before, will say, 'Hey, play this song or play that song,' and that's good because that gives me a day's notice," Adams says in a telephone interview.

"As we go, if someone requests something in time for me to figure it out (he'll add it). Because, I may have written them, but it doesn't mean I remember them all."

Having written and recorded so many songs and albums, Adams says, it's difficult for him to pick what his favorites might be, as all of his albums carry special memories for him.

"It's kind of like looking at a photo album of your life," he said of his albums. "When I think about all the different albums I've recorded, I can remember exactly where I was and what I was doing at the time. It'd be hard to choose one."

Mastering many styles

Adams has incorporated several different genres of music other than rock into his songwriting. Many of the songs he has written for films have enabled Adams to stretch as a songwriter.

Some of those songs include ones in the animated "Spirit: Stallion of the Cimarron" (featuring the international hit "Here I Am"); "The Mirror Has Two Faces" (featuring the hit duet "I Finally Found Someone," with Barbra Streisand); and the Johnny Depp film "Don Juan DeMarco" (featuring Adams' collaboration with flamenco guitarist Paco de Lucia "Have You Ever Really Loved a Woman?," a No. 1 hit.

"One thing I've noticed, even going back into the '90s when I recorded with Paco de Lucia, ... if somebody had said to me I would be recording with Paco and doing a song that had the Spanish influence like that, I would probably just have giggled," he says.

"The fact that I wrote the song with the film composer, it brought out a side of me that perhaps wouldn't have come out if I hadn't worked with them," he says. "The same thing applies to Spirit and to working with Barbra Streisand. Both (were) different projects, and both of them had an application that needed to be specific for the project."

If he had to say which he prefers more — songwriting, performing or recording — Adams says he gets different things from each, and each of them carries its own excitement.



More Information

Hit maker

What: Bryan Adams in concert as part of his Bare Bones Tour.

When: 8 p.m. Wednesday, Nov. 2

Where: Embassy Theatre, 121 W. Jefferson Blvd.

Cost: \$37.75, \$52.75 and \$77.75. Tickets available at the Embassy box office, Ticketmaster outlets, www.ticketmaster.com and 1-800-745-3000. For information, call The Embassy Theatre at 424-5665 or go to www.fwembassytheatre.org.

Listen in

To hear the audio of our interview with Bryan Adams, click the accompanying link.

“It’s all very different,” Adams said of songwriting, performing and recording. “Making music is probably one of the most exciting things, ... it’s all about the gut. Where performing live, you’ve taken the songs that are popular and maybe a couple of new ones and you’re going out and you’re doing your thing, it’s very immediate.

“But sometimes the writing and the recording is about creating magic.”

Making it as a musician

In April of this year, Adams also added fatherhood to his long list of achievements. His daughter, named Mirabella Bunny Grimaldi Adams because she arrived near Easter, is one of his proudest achievements outside of his career.

Looking back, Adams says, if there is one thing he’s most proud of, it’s “Paying my rent from making music.”