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Philharmonic will rock Saturday with the music of the Rolling Stones

By James Grant of The News-Sentinel
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The Rolling Stones are taking to the road this summer to celebrate 50 years of performing their special brand of bad boy rock and roll.

They're one of the most successful rock groups of all-time. In honor of their sterling career and catalog of hits, the Fort Wayne Philharmonic will present a tribute show titled "Satisfaction: The Music of The Rolling Stones" this Saturday night at the Embassy Theatre.

The concert is part of The Phil's Sweetwater Pops Series.

The performance features "Satisfaction — The International Rolling Stones Show," which is a tribute act that has been touring the world since 2001 and has played more than 1,800 Rolling Stones tribute shows.

The Fort Wayne Philharmonic concert is one of a limited number of the tribute band's performances this year that feature a symphony orchestra, a concept that has only been added to the production in the past couple of years.

Chris LeGrand, executive producer and creator of "Satisfaction — The International Rolling Stones Show," as well as a cast member in the Mick Jagger role, said even though The Rolling Stones are known as the "World's Greatest Rock and Roll Band," their music translates well to an orchestral setting.

"It's interesting, probably the last thing on anybody's mind when The Rolling stones came out in the '60s was coupling their music along with a symphony act because they were the original bad boys of rock 'n' roll," LeGrand said in a telephone interview.

"But, surprisingly, the music translates very well. When Keith Richards actually wrote the signature riff to "(I Can't Get No) Satisfaction," he had it in mind as a horn line," LeGrand said.

"Of course, you have the epic songs, like "Paint it Black" and "Gimme Shelter," and some of the ballads, like "Angie" or "Ruby Tuesday," where you put the orchestra behind it and you go, 'Wow, this is just breathtaking,'" LeGrand added. "You have to hear it to believe it."

LeGrand came up with the idea of doing a symphonic treatment of The Rolling Stones music while browsing through some records at a music store.

He ran across an album with symphonic recordings of The Rolling Stones and found that, the more he listened to the album, the more he wanted to do an orchestral version of his tribute show.

Originally, LeGrand just wanted to use orchestration to open his regular Rolling Stones tribute show, but that gradually evolved into a full orchestral performance of Rolling Stones music.

"It's a different environment for us being a straight rock 'n' roll group," LeGrand said of working with orchestras.

"We had to kind of re-learn how we perform when we play with the orchestra," he explained. "It's very challenging, and there's no improvisation obviously when you're playing with an orchestra.

"It just kind of keeps us on our toes."

While the orchestrated version of the show is relatively new to the "Satisfaction — The International Rolling Stones Show," the response from audiences has ensured that LeGrand will continue to expand the orchestrated performances in the future.

"The first one we did was with the San Diego Symphony a couple of years ago, and the response from the audience was great and we had good reviews, so now it's just starting to take off and we're doing 10 this year," LeGrand said.

"It's very exciting as these symphony pops concerts help bring a younger demographic to the symphony," he noted. "Someone that might not want to go see Tchaikovsky that's in their 20s or 30s, they see The Stones and say, 'Well, hey, we've got to go to this.'

"It's opening up a lot of new doors; the response has been very overwhelming."

"I think it's a different take on the music," LeGrand added about the show. "You have great songs, a great cast, a great orchestra and a great audience and, here we

More Information

Rolling Stones salute

What: The Fort Wayne Philharmonic presents the Pops Series concert "Satisfaction: The Music of The Rolling Stones," with tribute band "Satisfaction — The International Rolling Stones Show."

When: 8 p.m. Saturday

Where: Embassy Theatre, 121 W. Jefferson Blvd.

Cost: \$20-\$60. Tickets available at the Embassy box office, and from the Philharmonic at 481-0777 or www.fwphil.org.

Note: The Philharmonic and "Satisfaction — The International Rolling Stones Show" also will present their Pops concert at 7:30 p.m. Friday at the Honeywell Center in Wabash. For more information, go to www.fwphil.org.

Audio interview with Chris LeGrand of "Satisfaction"



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