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LIVE★Reviews

British Summer Time Festival

London Hyde Park
6-15/7/18

View: golden circle

All six shows of BST's sixth year featured stellar line-ups. Roger Waters headlined the first night with his spectacular, politicised display of Pink Floyd classics and solo offerings from *Is This The Life We Really Want?* Grenfell school children dressed as Guantanamo prisoners for Another Brick In The Wall Part II and a Trump-graffiti inflatable pig drifted by before a laser/fireworks Comfortably Numb finale.

Next night, The Cure celebrated their 40th anniversary, Robert Smith in black under a blazing sun for a mammoth, career-spanning set including a nine-song encore, contrasting the sweet harmonies of *The Wandering Hearts*, *Rockney* charms of Chas & Dave, and Italian rocker Zucchero. Steve Winwood's swirling Hammond pulsed on *I'm A Man* and Traffic's Pearly Queen, his soulful vocals perfect for the breezy *Higher Love* and rousing *Gimme Some Lovin'*. Santana fused addictive rhythms and jazzy guitar finesse, from the instrumental *Soul Sacrifice* to salsa *Smooth*. Headliner Eric Clapton and six-string partner Doyle Bramhall II knocked *Somebody's Knocking* into shape, before the acoustic strum of *Layla* and mournful *Tears In Heaven*. Marcy Levy brought *Lay Down Sally* to life, and Carlos Santana jammed on *High Time We Went*, with keyboardman Paul Carrack on high-calibre vocals.

The following weekend saw the sweet country-rock of Catherine McGrath and Megan McKenna, *The Feeling* delved into their pop-rock *Twelve Steps And Home*, and Bananarama bowed out with fabulous, crowd-pleasing hits. Van Morrison followed with *Moondance*, Jackie Wilson Said and Brown Eyed Girl, and had just finished *Gloria* when the heavens opened. Michael Buble sang in the rain, dazzling with a 25-piece orchestra on favourites from Dean Martin, Johnny Ray and Ray Charles, as well as his own *You Just Haven't Met Me Yet*, and the stunning *Always On My Mind*. Sunshine returned next day for headliner Bruno Mars, preceded by an assured Bonnie Raitt and the folk

wisdom of James Taylor, who delighted with *You Got A Friend*, *Carolina In My Mind*, The Beatles' *Something* and Marvin Gaye's *How Sweet It Is*. At 76, in his final UK solo set, Paul Simon delivered 26 songs, starting with the soul-searching *America*, before the dulcet *50 Ways To Leave Your Lover*, hair-raising *Bridge Over Troubled Water* and bass-driven finale of *You Can Call Me Al* and *Still Crazy After All These Years*. A five-song encore included the delicate *Homeward Bound*, *The Boxer* and hushed *Sound Of Silence*. **Magical.** **Mark Taylor**
Standout collectables: Eric Clapton hand-printed, artist-signed silkscreen poster, £55; Paul Simon programme with DL of six unissued songs, £20

Carl Palmer's ELP Legacy

London Chelsea
Under The Bridge
2/8/18

View: front, stool

The ELP torch-bearer's power trio rearranged their catalogue with guitar rather than keyboards as lead instrument, Paul Bielatowicz's dazzling technique and engaging presence bringing just the right mix of levity and virtuosity to dense pieces like *Trilogy* and *Tarkus*. Bassist Simon Fitzpatrick conjured up a palette of sounds and orchestrated gorgeous instrumental renditions of *From The Beginning* and *Take A Pebble*. But the heavy artillery was Palmer's, on *Tank*, and the precision thrusts of *Knife Edge*, the dynamo combining impish charm and ferocious concentration on *Kam Evil 9*.

The all-instrumental set also featured choice Palmer anecdotes and an insanely good 21st Century Schizoid Man. Rapturously received closers, *Fanfare For The Common Man* and *Nutrocker*, proved that, if not a show that never ends, it can still blow your mind. **Andy Rawl**
Standout collectable: 3 Live (Boston 88) CD

Okarina Festival

Lake Bled, Slovenia
26/7-5/8/18

View: various

The 28th *Okarina Festival* hosted world, folk and jazz from across the globe, highlights including harpist Catrin Finch, the African funk/hip-hop of Gato Preto, Los Mirlos' 46-year psych discography, street theatre by

Dakh Daughters, and amazing Balkan gypsy-jazz from 12-piece brass ensemble, *Fanfare Ciocarlia*, much of it from 2016's *Onward To Mars*. On Day 11, Richard Thompson, like a guitar-wielding Jeremy Corbyn, led his rock trio through 15 songs across 90 minutes and provided a fulsome sound concentrating on his recent catalogue and entertaining hard blues, country rock and new single, *The Bones Of Gilliad*. On *Guitar Hero*, his virtuosity took in the styles of Django Reinhardt, Les Paul, James Burton and Hank Marvin, before he encores with *The Sorrows Take A Heart*.

Closing Day 15, Natacha Atlas, assisted by violinist Samy Bishai, offered jazz chanteuse material, notably from 2015's *Myriad Road*. Retaining a Middle East feel, dreamy lyrics, sax, double-bass, piano and drums, she was reminiscent of 60s Julie Driscoll, and the crowd lapped it up. She concluded her set, and the festival, covering James Brown's *This Is A Man's World*. **Simon Matthews**
Standout collectable: festival T-shirt

Gilbert O'Sullivan

Teddington Landmark
Arts Centre
10/8/18

View: third row, aisle

O'Sullivan drew on a career-spanning portfolio for an assured performance of 25-plus songs, including early singles, *Disappear* and *What Can I Do*. The enduring power of *Nothing Rhymed* was a highlight, and there were classics throughout, such as *No Matter How I Try* and *Ooh Wakka-Doo-Wakka-Day*. Songs from his impressive new album, including the infectious groove of *No Head For Figures But Yours* and funky *Penny Drops*, were preceded by a beautifully evocative *We Will*.

Elsewhere, a reggae-tinged *Why, Oh Why, Oh Why* and gospelly *Where Peaceful Waters Flow* resonated. Backed by Bill Shanley's dextrous, versatile guitar, O'Sullivan was engaging and offered insights between songs. The final trio was a masterclass, beginning with the timeless anthem for bruised humanity, *Alone Again (Naturally)*, followed by *Matrimony* and a rollicking *Get Down*. Within minutes of

his ovation, O'Sullivan was signing albums and chatting with fans. **Classy.** **Steve Burniston**
Standout collectable: signed eponymous album/bonus single

Green Man Festival

Crickhowell, Powys
16-19/8/18

View: standing

Four sleepless nights, and the reason? Sunday's headliners, Philadelphia indie-rockers, *The War On Drugs*, their exhilarating set met with a rapturous response. Saturday's headliners, King Gizzard & The Lizard Wizard, have an eclectic catalogue, but they stuck to their psychedelic rock formula for the most part, apparently playing just the one song for about 90 minutes. And talking of getting into an acid groove, nobody does it better than *The Black Angels*. They delivered splendidly with big drums and hypnotic riffs, and while they may only have one trick, it's one that mesmerises.

There were no household names in the line-up this year, but you couldn't fault the quality of the artists, and the festival itself is in the beautiful setting of the Brecon Beacons, from which the rain steered clear. Hence, the lovely chilled vibe, bar the sleep deprivation. **Darren Howells**
Standout collectable: festival T-shirt

Steeleye Span

Shrewsbury Quarry
26/8/18

View: here, there and everywhere

A one-off *Shrewsbury Festival* slot from Maddy Prior and a fresh line-up faced a packed marquee and went for the jugular. She remains the touchstone of folk and knows how to work an audience, her vocals as warm and appealing as ever. With an eye to their

50th anniversary in 2019, Steeleye streamlined their set and Spud Sinclair ripped it up on *Edward*, while new boy Benji Kirkpatrick's reinvention of *Marrow Bones* matched Martin Carthy, reinventing the folk tradition through the electric medium. Julian Littman raised the ghost of Little Sir Hugh and the harmonies from six vocalists reminded us all that the Span have the best a capella lungs in the business.

Roger Carey's bass slotted in neatly alongside drummer Liam Genockey, and violinist Jesse May Smart prowled the stage, adding threatening, heavy bowing and light, neo-classical flourishes to the rock score, working particularly well with Sinclair's lead guitar lines in pushing the limits of their sound. They finished with the flamboyant reel, *Dodgy Bastards*, blazing guitars all the way. Quite a party. **Simon Jones**
No standout collectable

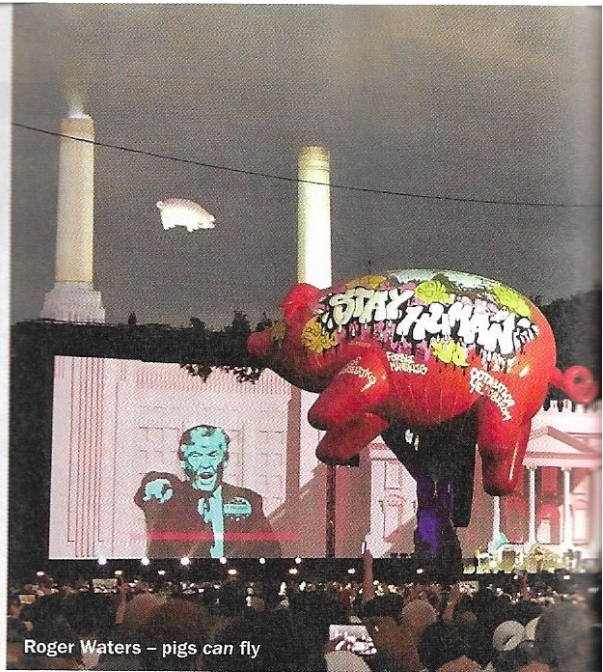
End Of The Road Festival

Blandford, Dorset
30/8-2/9/18

View: scrumpified

The depth of the *EOTR* bill means that the hidden gems are at least as exciting as the headliners. While sets by St Vincent and Vampire Weekend were spectacular, they lacked the humanity of Hiss Golden Messenger, whose JJ Cale-style funk and festival anthem, *Everybody Needs Somebody*, nigh on stole the day. But even that couldn't challenge the sheer bonkers brilliance and courage of *Low Anthem*, whose set included a suite of songs about plankton – really.

A small, rapt crowd enjoyed Jeff Tweedy's atmospheric solo versions of Wilco classics, like *Impossible Germany*. Other discoveries included Caroline Spence, channeling the spirit of ➤



Roger Waters – pigs can fly