

CONCERT DETAILS



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20 MAY 15 - ERIC CLAPTON

LOCATION:

Venue: Royal Albert Hall

City: South Kensington, London **Country:** United Kingdom

BAND LINEUP:

Eric Clapton – guitar, vocals Chris Stainton – piano, keyboards Paul Carrack - organ, keyboards, vocals Nathan East – bass
Steve Gadd – drums Michelle John – backing vocals Sharon White – backing vocals

SUPPORT:

Andy Fairweather Low & The Low Riders

SHOW NOTES:

The 2015 residency at the Royal Albert Hall was in celebration of Eric Clapton's 70th birthday on 30 March 2015. The concerts also mark the fifty years since he first played the venue on 7 December 1964 with The Yardbirds. This concert was filmed and recorded. No information has been made regarding potential release of the recordings.

SET LIST:

01. SOMEBODY KNOCKING 02. KEY TO THE HIGHWAY 03. TELL THE TRUTH 04. HOOCHIE COOCHIE MAN 05. YOU ARE SO BEAUTIFUL - Paul Carrack (vocals) 06. CAN'T FIND MY WAY HOME - Nathan East (vocals) 07. I SHOT THE SHERIFF 08. DRIFTIN 09. NOBODY KNOWS YOU WHEN YOU'RE DOWN AND OUT 10. TEARS IN HEAVEN 11. LAYLA 12. LET IT RAIN 13. WONDERFUL TONIGHT 14. CROSSROADS 15. LITTLE QUEEN OF SPADES 16. COCAINE 17. HIGH TIME WE WENT (ENCORE) – Paul Carrack (vocals), with guest Andy Fairweather Low

FAN REVIEWS:

Review by Steve Hoare

The wait is, for most of us painful, the anticipation and excitement unbearable but as the lights dim and the crowd roar it's appreciation you know it's going to be worth it. Watching Eric stroll out onto the Royal Albert Hall stage once again is just simply a wonderful feeling. He raises his arm to acknowledge the crowd and straps on his Strat and slides easily into the JJ Cale number 'Somebody's Knocking'. It's a laid back groove that allows the band to ease into the show without breaking too much of a sweat, a nice steady warm up with tasteful licks just as you'd expect. It's clear that with Eric being the only guitarist in these shows we're going to get plenty of what we've turned up to see.

Since those Blues shows at the RAH in the early 1990's 'Key To The Highway' has always been a personal favourite and so it's with great delight that Eric launches into a full on electric version of this once again, his playing precise and crisp, not a wasted note in sight and the solo's are smooth and searing, it's a beautiful thing for me, goose bumps fill my arms and the back of my neck as the notes filter out into the hall, I guess this is why we pay our money. You wonder at such an early stage of the show how he can top what you've just heard but immediately the opening riff to 'Tell The Truth' starts and once again the feeling returns. The band are tight and on the money, drummer Steve Gadd drives the band and lays the solid foundation along with Nathan East on Bass that allows Eric to do what he does best, the section before the main guitar solo is like a gear change and once again Eric provides a lesson in taste and tone, it's what all us guitar players in the audience aspire to.

'Hoochie Coochie Man' follows and is a treat for all us blues lovers, 'You Are So Beautiful' (sang by Paul Carrack) and 'Can't Find My Way Home' (sang by Nathan East) follow and take the intensity down a notch. Eric then takes back the spotlight and plays a funky little intro to 'I Shot The Sheriff' the groove is happening and then the finest moment of the whole show kicks in as Eric launches into the solo, it's simply outstanding, his ability to provide such light and shade, such attack and sustain in his playing is immeasurable, it's moments like this when it's so clearly apparent that he really is the master of his craft and why he has been and is so revered after all these years.

The acoustic section of the show kicks off with 'Driftin' and is followed by three of the famous 'Unplugged' albums finest songs 'Nobody Knows When You're Down and Out', a reggae infused 'Tears In Heaven' and of course 'Layla' which is greeted with rapturous applause, Eric looks happy and right at home.

'Let it Rain' is a nice addition, I can't remember hearing this before in the 25 years I've been watching him, 'Wonderful Tonight' is an obvious choice but I think I've just heard it too many times now to get excited by it, on the other hand 'Crossroads' follows and despite how many times I've heard this I never tire of it, I guess Eric always makes it sound fresh and so full of energy, you still get a sense that he enjoys it, tonight is no exception. The obligatory slow blues of 'Little Queen of Spades' shows off the standard of musicians that Eric has always attracted in his bands, Chris Stainton on piano and Paul Carrack on hammond organ throw their hats into the ring and show what they can do, their solos are spot on but we all know where Eric's heart lies and when he launches into his solo he once again proves that there's no one quite like him on this planet, the notes wash over you and the spine tingling sensation returns once again with each note he plays.

'Cocaine' wraps up the proceedings with the crowd on their feet singing along. The band walk off stage as the crowd yells for more, a few minutes later they return, every one of them smiling. Andy Fairweather Low is with them and despite a shakey start they round out the show with Joe Cocker's 'High Time We Went'. It's another truly magical evening at The Royal Albert Hall, one that I hope will not be the last and judging by the packed venue I'm not alone in thinking that.

Review by Diana Smith / Nottingham

Another superb concert on Wednesday 20 May from a truly exceptional guitarist and band, but tinged with sadness that, on this one night only, 'Pretending' was omitted from the playlist and, of course, that these shows may well be the last of their kind. What will I do without the annual highlight of an Eric Clapton show for the past 25 years? At least this evening's concert was being recorded so, hopefully, there will be a dvd available for purchase in the UK in the not too distant future. Thank you for the music, Eric.

Review by Gösta Kylsberg / Stockholm, Sweden

Back in London for some vacation and once again in connection with Eric Clapton's Royal Albert Hall concerts – and we were lucky to see two of them! We were supposed to go on Thursday 21st May, but on Wednesday evening, 20th May, (the fifth night) we luckily managed to get two tickets at the Albert Hall Box Office just before the show started... What a night! What a concert! What a performance at Royal Albert Hall!

Eric's 70th birthday concert really was really a strong show and he played with such energy. The set list included 17 songs, starting with a great version the J.J. Cale song Somebody knocking, then Eric continued with an up tempo version of Key to the Highway (up tempo) and then the Derek & The Dominos song, Tell the Truth, one of my favorites.

The absolute highlight of the show was I Shot the Sheriff. Eric really gave "everything", gradually building up the guitar solo towards the end of the song. It was really the "knock-out" of the evening.

Other favorites in my opinion were Crossroads, the not so often performed Let it Rain and Little Queen of Spades with great solos by Chris Stainton and Paul Carrack. And the acoustic part was brilliant, of course, especially Tears in Heaven and Layla.



Eric had good support from the band, e.g. with vocals by Paul Carrack in a very sensitive You Are So Beautiful and the encore High Time We Went. Nathan East contributed with a nice version of the Blind Faith song Can't Find My Way Home. Steve Gadd was great on drums as always.



All in all, a fantastic show that I will remember for a long time. It was filmed so hopefully a DVD will come out soon. It will be worth buying, watching and will give great memories. It was really a treat being at the concert. Eric really gave us fans a birthday present this night. Thank you Eric and happy birthday once more! Hope to see and hear you playing soon again.

Review by Hiroshi M.

When I attended the shows on the 2013 tour in Birmingham, Manchester and London, I presumed it might well turn to be Eric's last great tour, if his musical carrier came to an end anytime soon. The intensity of his playing, driven by the reckless rhythm section of Willie Weeks and Steve Jordan, one hell of a groove duo, was second to none. It is such a pity the Japanese couldn't experience these shows, as his tour over there the following year saw the band overhauled and the rhythm men changed to Nathan East and Steve Gadd, the ever reliable, solid but less thrilling (in my humble opinion) firm hand, "the safe blanket" to quote Eric's remark on them from Planes Trains And Eric DVD/blu-ray.

Well, I was wrong...

The show at the Royal Albert Hall on 20th of May, performed by the same guys of the 2014 Japan tour, was nothing short of awesome. The great B.B. may have been gone now, but a plenty of the thrill was there to be delivered and felt. The highlights were Sheriff, Crossroads, LQOS and Cocaine (back to wah-wah solo after all these years of no-frill approach and a welcome one at that!). Other than the above, show stoppers for everyone, I like the laid-back, slow-burning show opener of Somebody's Knocking. I wish he had done it in Japan. Another personal highlight for me was Tell The Truth, played so slow, reminiscent of the original studio version off the Layla album, that it narrowly evaded a train wreck, a different kind of thrill.

A few songs could have been better — most notably Let It Rain. To me, even those not-so-well executed performances, along with the ever-present, ever-sweet 'n' cheesy Wonderful Tonight, contributed to the evening as kind of breathers among the powerful and intense. The show was that good.

Towards the end of the night, the responses from the floor were going stronger and stronger, and by Cocaine it got most of the crowd in the arena and the stalls standing up, cheering, clapping and yelling for more, a rare occurrence for the audience of the RAH that was known for their general sedateness.

Not bad for Eric and the Safe Blanket, indeed...

