

9 Sep 2006 - Concert Review Boston Globe - Roger Waters Band Tweeter Center, Boston, MA, USA (8-Sep-06)

Roger Waters is still in the Pink

By Sarah Rodman, Globe Staff | September 9, 2006

When there are speakers hanging over the concourse and up on the lawn you know someone from Pink Floyd must be playing the Tweeter Center. Roger Waters, former bassist and songwriter for the legendary rockers, brought the surround sound, an unimpeachable nine-person band, and grand visual accompaniment to bear on a catalog steeped in majesty, misanthropy, and the tiniest glimmer of hope. In the first of a two-night stand Waters, looking fighting-trim, played a wide-ranging 2-hour-and-40-minute set with the celebrated 1973 Floyd album "The Dark Side of the Moon" at its heart. All it took was those familiar, menacing hammers marching in lockstep across the giant central video screen -- as the creeping dread of "In the Flesh?" boomed out of the speakers -- to light up the sold-out crowd of both Waters's contemporaries and successive generations of Floyd enthusiasts.

The first set was given over mainly to an idiosyncratic set of Floyd tunes including classics like "Wish You Were Here" and "Have a Cigar" and deeper cuts like "The Fletcher Memorial Home" -- a stinging indictment of political leaders past and present. Curiously Waters chose to play only two songs from his solo catalog the galvanizing anti-nuke anthem "Perfect Sense" and the new "Leaving Beirut." The latter was accompanied by stunning comic-book style, black - and - white stills recounting a night Waters spent as a teen with a generous Arab family who took him in when he was stranded in Lebanon. He linked their generosity to his outrage at the way both the British and US governments have handled the conflict in the Middle East, shooting daggers at President Bush in particular. While some sat, or took a bathroom break, others cheered vigorously at his pointed barbs. It was one reminder among many that a Waters show may be about spectacle but it is not about escapism.

The "Dark Side" portion of the evening was by turns trippy and explosive with the funky backbone of "Money" and Carol Kenyon 's dynamite, expressive wailing of "The Great Gig in the Sky" highlights.

Waters, who turned 63 on Wednesday, sang along spiritedly to the parts sung by his former bandmate David Gilmour , which he ceded to more mellifluously voiced members of his band. Although he was unquestionably the intellectual architect of the group it's worth noting that Waters employed three people to sub for Gilmour. Dave Kilminster and Snowy White supplied reverential, note - perfect renditions of the guitar great's still-movingly lyrical solos and Kilminster and keyboardist Jon Carin lent smooth vocal edges to tracks like "Money" and "Us and Them."

A final plea to "Bring the Boys Back Home" gave way to "Comfortably Numb", which brought the evening to an elegant and forceful conclusion.