

25 Sep 2006 - Concert Review Pittsburgh Post-Gazette - Roger Waters Band Post Gazette Pavilion, Pittsburgh, PA, USA (24-Sep-06)

Waters gives 'Dark Side' a precise, exciting live ride

By Scott Mervis, Pittsburgh Post-Gazette | Monday, September 25, 2006

"The Dark Side of the Moon" is a mythic album that has lived so deep inside the world of radio and headphones it's almost hard to imagine people actually touching it with their hands.

Sunday night at the Post-Gazette Pavilion, Roger Waters put a human face on the masterpiece, with an 11-member ensemble that beautifully executed the Floyd vision of high spectacle and jaw-dropping musical precision.

The band came out for the second set and performed the concept album nearly note for note, while the various piped-in voices and effects danced around in 360-degree sound with heart-pumping intensity. Waters actually sings very little of "Dark Side," but in Dave Kilminster, he has a guitarist and singer who must have spent a lot of time in his room pretending he was David Gilmour. He even looks like a young version of Gilmour.

Kilminster handled the gritty "Money," while keyboardist John Carin, who was ever-so-slightly hoarse, graced the more delicate vocals of "Time" and "Us and Them," with Waters rushing in on the chorus. Carol Kenyon, one of three electrifying backup singers, stepped forward to scale the amazing vocal heights of "The Great Gig in the Sky." The result was spectacular, and the crowd's excitement even added a new element to the music.

Call it a Pink Floyd tribute band (as some do) but, remember, "Dark Side" is an essential piece of rock repertoire, and its composer was there as the maestro.

Waters, looking regal in his dark black suit and sweeping silver hair, played a much bigger role in the equally stunning first set. Despite the obsessively dark subject matter, Waters was a cordial host who cracked a smile on numerous occasions.

Still, between his chilling vocals and throbbing bass style, Waters managed to be menacing nonetheless. After setting the stage with a clever video of a hand controlling an antique radio playing hits by Elvis, Chuck Berry and others, Waters greeted the crowd with the disturbing "In the Flesh," containing its prophecy of a "surrogate band."

He donned an acoustic guitar for "Mother," his first of many salvos at the military-industrial complex that took his father when he was just an infant. "Set the Controls for the Heart of the Sun" was a trippy voyage back into early Floyd. Syd Barrett, pictured on the screen, had to be smiling down on a "Shine On You Crazy Diamond" that came complete with a cascade of bubbles. Yes, bubbles!

Kilminster did some of his most fiery and rhythmic guitar work on "Have a Cigar," which also demonstrated the band's exactness on the abrupt ending.

We've gone this far without mentioning George W. Bush, which is more than we can say for Waters. You could say the Floyd singer has inducted him into his "Fletcher Memorial Home" for tyrants and kings. During that song, the video screen, which was up to something mind-blowing or narrative on each song, took us on a tour of a nightmarish mental institution, where the portrait of Mr. Bush sat on the wall alongside bin Laden, Stalin and Saddam.

During this war section, which included a spaceman hovering on the epic "Perfect Sense," Waters introduced a new song, "Leaving Beirut," which was less of a song than a political speech set to music. Among the lyrics flashed were "Oh, George, that Texas education must have [messed] you up when you were small." For the first time, a healthy mix of boos rained down along with the cheers, and that was even before the pink pig came out on the scary "Sheep," with the words "Impeach Bush Now." The president even worked his way into "Eclipse," with his picture flashing just as Waters sang "all you distrust." (As with CSNY fans, it's hard to fathom how Floyd fans would miss Waters' career-long distaste for armed conflict.)

Waters closed the show with assorted pieces of "The Wall." But between the wondrous musicianship, the Bush-bashing and the dark immersion into his own obsessions, he sent the fans to the parking lot anything but "Comfortably Numb."