

The Concert I Never Gave... except for, like, 2000 times in my bedroom - A Review

"I am fostering American ambition, intermixed with a crippling Canadian humility" – Eric McCormack

I walked into the Stanley Industrial Alliance Stage for the first time last night and was pleasantly surprised by the talent that would unfold before me.

Broadway and iconic TV actor Eric McCormack's one-man (and a band) show last night did everything but disappoint.

Featured were musical icons Loren Gold, keyboardist and backup vocalist to the Who, my personal friend and 90's music legend Tyler Stewart of the Barenaked Ladies, and of course, Murray Foster, bass player for the classic Newfoundland band Great Big Sea.

What I loved about the line-up were local additions such as Stephanie Glegg, classically trained cellist and songbird, as well as guitarist Paul Kinman, whose amazing talent and off-stage kindness was incredible.

The night before, my old friend Tyler, who I met during the 2010 Winter Olympics (we both were a part of the Molson Canadian Hockey House VIP host team), sent me a message inviting me to meet him and his pals at the Wedgewood Hotel. Little did I know when I walked into the ornate lobby and restaurant that is celebrated for its classic, understated ambience, that I would be seated at a table with incredible musicians and talents, and the night would end in all of us surrounding the piano in the lounge, belting out Beatles tunes like 'Lady Madonna', and 'Hey Jude'. Walking home that night, I was on cloud nine, I mean, I just sang with the piano player from the WHO, and he didn't tell me I was terrible. (life goal achieved!)

When I was asked to attend the final show, I couldn't possibly decline. Great talents AND people, all for a cause. Count me in.

The show was powerful, a narrative that weaved between time-honoured tunes from artists like Elton John, Burton Cummings, Billy Joel, and Queen, to the "side three orphans" who shaped Eric McCormack's youth. It told the story about a young man and his tennis racket, a professional "desk player," and how he grew from his bedroom concerts to Broadway, international comedic sitcom stardom, and even having the chance to song write with the world famous Barry Manilow.

Eric led us on a musical and comedic journey, making us laugh, cry, and some of us cringe (you should see him in a Freddie Mercury onesie, it was fabulous). He succeeded in drawing attention to the cause that not only affects thousands of people here in Vancouver, but also took his father from him far too early; Prostate Cancer.

When asked about his youth concerts and how they shaped him, Eric told the Vancouver Sun that these concerts made him realize that he was destined to be a performer.

"Looking back upon that, I realize it was the beginning of my acting, and I was never more true to myself than when I was a kid in Scarborough, Ontario, dreaming that dream. Every song in the show has a story behind it about why it mattered so much then and still does to me today."

Cancer affected Eric through the loss of both his parents, and his story, his songs, and the underlying tone of appreciating life and the people you have in yours, was a cause within the cause.

After the show, lucky as I am, I got to attend the VIP after party located at the Stanley theatre. Wine and blue popcorn were served as Eric and the band graciously greeted and thanked the people who made the event happen. I was impressed and awed by Eric's truly quintessential Canadian humility, and his passion to end the suffering of others with Cancer.

To Eric and the Band, I say Bravo. You played beautifully, the story was gripping, and it is an amazing journey you have all taken.

Until next time,
MissWit xo

