

Slideshow: Heart Rocks Rosemont Theater in Chicagoland

Submitted by [PatrickMcD](#) [1] on July 2, 2015 - 10:11am

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Heart at 'The Drive' FM 14th Annual Birthday

Bash

CHICAGO – The recent viral YouTube video of Heart's "Stairway To Heaven" performance – before the surviving members of Led Zeppelin – proved once and for all that Ann and Nancy Wilson of that legendary band are good enough to make Robert Plant, and fans new and old, weep tears of joy. Numerous musical trends and band personnel have come and gone since Heart's 1976 debut "Dreamboat Annie," but at its cardiac core the most celebrated sister act of rock continues to beat on as strong as ever, while keeping their love alive.

Heart was the headlining act – backed by hometown hero Dennis DeYoung singing the music of Styx – at the 14th Annual Birthday Bash of the Chicago radio station "The Drive" (97.1 FM). The event took place at the Rosemont (Illinois) Theater on June 12th, 2015, and from the opening guitar scream of "Magic Man," it was apparent that Heart has lost none of its passion or fire. Ann Wilson's legendary siren voice can still soar the stratosphere which she proved on the song "Alone," causing the audience to rise likewise and spontaneously breakout into applause mid-song. Sister Nancy remains a bonafide guitar hero – a feminist pioneer from the age of Pong – whose girl power kicks helped smash the glass ceiling of rock. Her fretboard gymnastics continue to tangle the fingers of yet another generation of acoustic players, regardless of gender.

During their cover of The Sonic's "The Witch" it was obvious that the band members were truly enjoying themselves. This is in no way a band content on just going through the nostalgic motions for an easy castle payment, like so many of their still-touring classic rock contemporaries. Guitarist Craig Bartock did a Robin Trower song proud with Heart's searing version of "Day of the Eagle," but where the band shimmered at its finest, as always, are the songs crafted around the Wilson's sublime vocal harmonies.

1980s hits "There's the Girl" and "These Dreams" were stripped down and reworked, the latter featuring mandolin accompaniment have never sounded better. Ironically, in any other band except the one she shares with her vocally-blessed sister, the singing skills of Nancy

Wilson would land her center microphone full time. While the ghost of legendary drummers in the past can easily cast a lingering shadow – and the rhythm section may not be as over the top as earlier versions of the band – drummer Ben Smith still rocked steady and strong without missing a beat. The songs “Bebe Le Strange” and “Kick It Out” were a couple of high powered standouts.

The set ended with an encore triple play of Led Zeppelin covers done to perfection with “The Immigrant Song,” “No Quarter” and “Misty Mountain Hop” – which for me was the only disappointment of the evening. Zeppelin tribute bands have become a dime a dozen as of late, a virtual cottage industry. Granted, Ann and Nancy Wilson could possibly out-Zeppelin even Led Zeppelin themselves at this point, hitting the original notes that for Robert Plant are at least “ten years gone.” But Heart is too great a band in its own right to be sacrificing so much gold off their play list to still be paying homage to others.

Playing nothing but their Top 40 Billboard hits – 23 to this point – would easily fill a two hour plus set, but Heart has always seemed just a little too humble for all they have accomplished. Now that they stand shoulder-to-shoulder in the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame, with so many of their inspirational idols whose music they began their career covering, perhaps Heart can pull off what The Beatles, Led Zeppelin and The Who never could. – a post Hall of Fame reunion tour reuniting all original band members. To echo Robert Plant’s classic Led Zeppelin lyric...”Ooh It makes me wonder...”

SET LIST: *Magic Man, Heartless, What About Love, Kick it Out, Straight On, Bebe Le Strange, There’s the Girl, These Dreams, Alone, Day of the Eagle (cover), The Witch (cover), Crazy on You, Barracuda, Encore (Led Zeppelin Covers) Immigrant Song, No Quarter, Misty Mountain Hop*

NOTE: The author of this review, Joe Arce, also took these Exclusive Portraits of Heart for HollywoodChicago.com. Click “Next” and “Previous” to scan through the slideshow or jump directly to individual photos with the captioned links below. All images © Joe Arce of Starstruck Foto for HollywoodChicago.com.

Band Members of Heart: Ann Wilson (Lead and backing vocals, guitar), Nancy Wilson (Guitarist, mandolin, vocals), Craig Bartock (Guitarist), Dan Rothchild (Bass), Ben Smith (Drums, percussion) and Chris Joyner (Keyboards)

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Heart, featuring Ann and Nancy Wilson, continues their #Music=Love Tour 2015. [Click here](#) [65] for tour dates, details and ticket information.

By [JOE ARCE](#) [67]



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