Music Review: Iron Maiden Conjures the Soul of Heavy Metal in Chicagoland Concert

Submitted by PatrickMcD [1] on June 19, 2017 - 10:49am

- 238 Studios [2]
- Adrian Smith [3]
- British Heavy Metal [4]
- Bruce Dickinson [5]
- Dave Murray [6]
- Eddie [7]
- Hollywood Casino Amphitheater [8]
- HollywoodChicago.com Content [9]
- Illinois [10]
- Iron Maiden [11]
- Janick Gers [12]
- Jeff Doles [13]
- Music [14]
- Music Review [15]
- Nicko McBrain [16]
- Patrick McDonald [17]
- Steve Harris [18]
- The Book of Souls [19]
- Tinley Park [20]

CHICAGO – On a hot and humid night – with dark ominous clouds enveloping the Hollywood Casino Amphitheater in Tinley Park, Ill. on June 15th, 2017 – the crowd gathered to see Iron Maiden, and spilled into their seats like a cold beer from the tap. The heavy metal-loving masses, with their torn jeans and ever-present mullets, got ready for the latest show in the band's "The Book of Souls" World Tour by responding in Pavlovian fashion to UFO's "Doctor Doctor" (Maiden's intro song), as it boomed from the venue's speakers.

The band's frontman Bruce Dickinson initially appeared on stage, staring enchantingly into a steaming cauldron while summoning the spirits of all things Iron Maiden. The 58 year-old singer's recent brush with cancer does not appear to be slowing him down. If anything, it has helped him appreciate his incredible fortune to be on stage with his fellow metal mavericks.

Dickinson's powerful voice has never sounded better, and while at 5-feet-6-inches tall he may be considered small in stature, his stage presence is nothing but big. Bruce embraced his role of entertainer and led the charge, carrying the British flag during the song "The Trooper." Also throughout the two hour performance, Dickinson was leaping from Mayan civilization themed stage props, dueling his mummified nemesis Eddie (the band's mascot), literally monkeying around while wearing a mask and running the stage while singing as only he can. Dickinson beckoned the crowd on several occasions to "Scream for me, Chicago!"



Iron Maiden at Hollywood Casino Amphitheater, June 15th, 2017
Photo credit: Jeff Doles, 238 Studios

The driving force, and only remaining founding band member, is bassist and song writer Steve Harris. He continued to amaze with his playing precision and unparalleled technical approach. The three guitarists led the charge, standing in their signature machine gun stance and shooting the sounds of metal power at the audience. Nicko McBrain's rhythmic and explosive drumming was the backbeat that kept echoing into the night.

The band did a masterful job of inter-splicing old and new tracks, with the audience and the band synched as one… the crowd sang along with every word. The ages in the amphitheater ranged from 4 to 94, with kids on their Dad's shoulders holding their hands high, and forming the infamous devil horns. Dickinson took several moments during the show to ponder deep thoughts about a variety of topics including the current state of politics, and what matters most in life, and at one point he stated, "I'm not big on dividing up people." He added he does not care about race, religion or sexual orientation, just that we were all here to celebrate Iron Maiden. "People that come to an Iron Maiden show are Iron Maiden people."

Bruce also took a moment prior to playing "Children of the Damned" – from 1982 – to point out to some of the flabbergasted fans in their thirties that they might have been conceived during the songs whimsical prelude. "Who here was born after 1982?" he teased, "There is a bit of the beginning of the song that gets a bit smoochy."



Iron Maiden's 'The Book of Souls' World Tour
Photo credit: IronMaiden.com

The set list for the night is as follows…

01. If Eternity Should Fail
02. Speed Of Light
03. Wrathchild
04. Children Of The Damned
05. Death Or Glory
06. The Red And The Black
07. The Trooper
08. Powerslave
09. The Great Unknown
10. The Book Of Souls
11. Fear Of The Dark
12. Iron Maiden
Encore
13. The Number Of The Beast
14. Blood Brothers
15. Wasted Years

The final song ended with the metal legends and the fans singing the apropos lyrics to "Wasted Years"…

Don't waste your time always searching for
those wasted years

Face up… make your stand
And realize you're living in the golden years

One fan held up their crutches that were crowned with an Eddie halloween mask. It was a symbolic representation of how this band might be old and beaten, but it still rocks.

Review and Photography by: **Jeff Doles**, 238 Studios
Published by: **Patrick McDonald**, Editorial Coordinator, HollywoodChicago.com

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For more information about Iron Maiden's 2017 The Book of Souls World Tour click here. *[21] The band's latest album is 2015's "The Book of Souls," which debuted at number one in 40 countries, and number four in the United States.*

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