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Monday, June 28, 2010
Concert review: Rik Emmett at Poor David's Pub in Dallas (June 27)

by Ron Dempesmeier

Emmett is a guitarist's guitarist, and his ability in his acoustic set shined brightly.

The timing was fortuitous for a great little acoustic concert by rock guitar icon **Rik Emmett** in the intimate confines of **Poor David's Pub**. Emmett came to the Dallas-Fort Worth area to participate in a **Concert in the Garden** with the **Fort Worth Symphony Orchestra** on June 26. Before heading back to Toronto, he was able to work in an afternoon gig with borrowed guitars (his FWSO instruments were electric, too loud for the venue and packed away). The promoter, DW Promotions (aka Don Wishon), managed to find some excellent instruments among some local musicians and has proven to be quite adept at guerilla-style concerts of high quality like this.



Emmett will always be primarily known as the lead guitarist and co-lead vocalist of the legendary Canadian power trio **Triumph**. But as his many years in that band and in his now longer solo career, Emmett has shown his love of blues, classical, jazz, flamenco and swing. He is a guitarist's guitarist, and his ability with the songs in his acoustic sets shone through.

"Middle Ground" was a soaring medium tempo song that showed Emmett's fine tenor was still capable of hitting those high notes. "Petite Etude" was the first acoustic showcase of his classical style and one that he jokingly said had been too long since he last played as he started again and played the intricate number beautifully. "Lay it on the Line" was played on the 12-string acoustic to give it a heartier feel since it was one of Triumph's hard rock anthems.

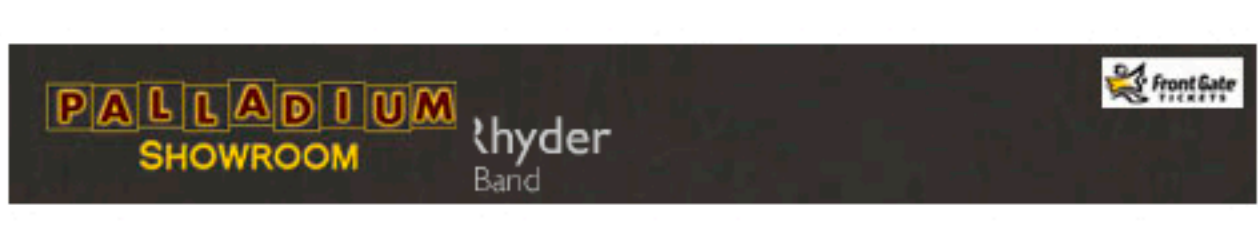
Emmett introduced the next two swing-based songs as his tribute to **Lonnie Johnson** (a 1920/'30s jazz guitarist) who had an instrumental called "Woke Up This Morning with Blues in My Fingers." Emmett thought was a great title and one for which he thought he could create lyrics. Another classically influenced showpiece was "Midsummer's Daydream" from the *Thunder Seven* album by Triumph.

Emmett had a lot of stories and jokes to tell between songs. He shared that he wrote "Way Back Home" for his two daughters as they headed off to college, one was written about a street musician he had seen busking for "Spare Change," and that he was inspired by the thought of the thousands of prayers that went to the ceiling of Toronto's St. Michael's Cathedral for the song "Secret Wishes."

Emmett played a lovely rendition of Paul McCartney's classic "Blackbird." He referred to how many other classics the Beatle had written and that McCartney was still going strong at 69. Emmett jokingly said, "It just isn't fair!"

Emmett ended the show with a pair of Triumph classics. "Magic Power" was another uplifting song concerning the amazing properties of music and how it makes one feel young, wild and free. Finally, he played "Suitcase Blues," which was his first foray into a jazzier vein that his somewhat flabbergasted band mates let him put on the *Just a Game* album in 1979. He thanked the guys for letting him discover a side that let him keep playing long after the spandex, pyrotechnics and blinding light shows of youth faded away. It was a great ending to an intimate afternoon show.

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Staff ■ Verified User ■ Anonymous ■

arcangels1992, says:
A great show as always. Rik is the consummate musician. Fabulous sound compliments of Carlos and a perfect setlist. Thanks Don!
Anonymous
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Posted by Sarah Blaskovich

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It's nice to be missed, Juliette, thanks! I caught a glimpse of you in the WFAA video post, looking pretty happy.

John Congleton / Daniel Folmer / Timothy Jarrod Smith / John Congleton Projects

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