

All Stars at the Auditorium Parco della Musica

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If last year we had the pleasure of listening to new voices, up and coming bands and the young at their best, this year's summer stretch at the **Cavea** seems reserved for the **seasoned stalwarts**. The twentyeight hundred strong open air amphitheatre in **Rome's Auditorium Parco Della Musica** has been resounding with the music of **established names and legends** of the rock and roll, rock, jazzrock and pop eras such as: **The Manhattan Transfer**, 28th June; **Ringo Starr and His All Starr Band**, 4th July; **Chicago**, 9th July and **Elton John and His Band** 13th July 2011.

These stars, all household names in their own right, with the very occasional dip into the realm of country and western, through their incredible performances proved that the rewards are many for those who stick together through the thick and the thin in a precarious music industry world. How astonishing it was to witness an amazing number of original members in each of these bands!

For sheer beauty of sound, four voices in harmony as they soar to and attain a perfection that stems from the experience of years together (as in Java Jive), [The Manhattan Transfer](#) [2] could well be given the **Cavea prize** for the year. From *a cappella* singing to pop, fusion and contemporary, idioms dovetailed with ease in their hands.

Tim Hauser had the command of the veteran, **Alan Paul** the **haunting old world voice** that moved from baritone to tenor with ease and Brooklyn born **Janis Siegel** who had surprisingly commenced her career with pop was most comfortable in her downright jazz arrangements. That she is well seated today in the jazz repertoire of standards and innovative arrangements came across in her version of [Weather Report's](#) [3] *Birdland* as she shaped, cast and recast words and syllables renewing the whole meaningfully. **Cheryl Bentley** excelled in the blues and soul numbers with the voice of a **Broadway musical lead star** exhibiting a linear flexibility as well as an admirable vocal range. **The Manhattan Transfer** were lively and amusing yet touched the heart in a manner that makes their performance in Rome memorable.

All Starr Eloquence

Truly rollicking and vastly entertaining as a show in excess of expectations was that of [Ringo Starr & His All Starr Band](#) [4]. Ringo whether vocalising by his drumset or prancing around the stage microphone in hand was warm and totally in touch with the pulse of his fans that thronged that evening. Conscious of his power over the public in such a disarming manner that even his reminders of **'I'm The greatest'** fetched constant rounds of laughter, he exchanged pleasantries with all and sundry, sightreading placards miles away.

And the Starrs on the tour, like planets drawing their warmth from the sun, shone bright as **band members** who worked with **clockwork precision** supporting each other vocally and with fabulous instrumental solos, as well as

soloists who each had his own string of hits. **Wally Palmer** (guitar, harmonica and vocals) with his *Talking In Your Sleep*, **Gary Wright** on keyboards and vocals with his *haunting Dream Weaver* woven from fragments of **Hindu philosophy** and of course **Richard Page**, who with his showstopper momentarily eclipsed the band leader, each in turn endeavoured to steal the limelight from centrestage.

The Mr. Mister single **Broken Wings**, purportedly churned out of **Khalil Gibran**, was delivered by Page in its vibrant new garb! **Rick Derringer** on guitars was superb, **Gregg Bissonette** accomplished and **Edgar Winter** on keyboards, sax and vocals variously agile, energetic and fluent. From the old repertoire, to delight one and all, were Ringo's "**I Wanna Be Your Man**", "**Yellow Submarine**", "**Photograph**" and newer musings on the worldfamous hometown with "**The Other Side of Liverpool**".

For a show that commenced with "**It Don't Come Easy**", **Ringo** showed how easy it all is when you "Act Naturally"! Specially "**With A Little Help From Your Friends**", in this case **His All Starr Band**! At ease, relaxed, he could have been doing anything anywhere while drumming and singing to please his fans. He wasn't all that interested in singing perfectly or well for he exuded charm no matter what! His style was confident and any lapses were instantly forgiven for he was warm and humane first and foremost. The only glaring omission this evening was Ringo Starr's best-ever song "**You're Sixteen**"!

Chic Chicago

The celebrated jazz rock band, that shares its name with a city and a musical but has a sound all its own, intoxicated the crowds with heady collections of superbly strung jazzrock hits from their early career spun with dexterity, grace and a command of the genre as well as the pop soulful ballads in the haunting renditions of **Jason Scheff** that made all the difference to their career and installed them in the topmost echelons of the pop charts for years. A success that affected and changed the musical sound of the band to a considerable extent and though they continued to experiment, the taste of success resulted in repetitions of the same kind of song that again fetched them rewards in terms of the pop charts but stylistically and musically the band ran themselves into the danger of repeating themselves *ad nauseam* in the bargain. However for us at the Cavea it was still quite a novelty having this classic sound and immensely stylish band perform.

The immensely successful number from *Chicago 16* "**Hard To Say I'm Sorry**" was magically delivered by the vocalist who's been twentyfive years with [Chicago](#) [5], who also had the lead in most numbers from that period such as "**You're The Inspiration**" from *Chicago 17* with its intricate guitar solo. Dramatically effective, "**Being Without You Takes A Lot Of Getting Used To**" was well supported on keyboards, guitars and drums, with heady brass fanfare effects at its conclusion.

And although the public loved "**Baby What A Big Surprise**" with its charming flute trumpet solos and the stream of melodically keen songs spun with intensity by Jason, the band excelled with a precision and charm in all the **Chicago** standards such as **Robert Lemm**'s "**Saturday In The Park**" and jazz rock and rock and roll songs. With **Tris Imboden** formidable on drums, **Drew Hester**'s percussion maintaining a grip on the whole, both bass guitarist (Jason) and lead **Keith Howland** terrific and the brass trio trombonist **James Pankow**, **Lee Loughnane** trumpet, **Walter Parazaid** (woodwinds, flute, flugelhorn) comfortably floating above it all as and when, the Chicago sound was smooth and impeccable both in unison and when individual band members each had their say.

With four founder members still with this band and **Jason** having lodged 25, **Howland** 15 and **Imboden** 20 years, the original sound of the band's still intact much to the delight of the public, especially as glimpsed in the jazz and art rock ballads from *Chicago 7*. **Lou Pardini** (the Hammond keyboardist and vocals) and **Robert Lemm** (the Yamaha keyboardist) also excelled in their vocals and songs. And of course, last but not least, the song I spoke of, the one that changed their lives and lean lyric comfortable songtrack life/style, was the thrill of the evening. Was there anyone left unmoved by "**If You Leave Me Now**"!

Elton Extravaganza

The [Elton John](#) [6] show at the Cavea was all set to be the event that it was straight from the queue at the entrance, the flashy paper imitation **Elton John** goggles being handed out by sponsors and, not to disappoint enthusiasts who may have been there for the first time, it came with all the legendary gimmicks : the proverbial Elton John package of Elton in his brilliant **Yellow Brick Road** suit, his occasional conducting from the piano, his jumping up and down from and onto the piano while performing and as if to emphasize the occasional song finale.

A touch of colour came from the **two Croatian cellists** in red with their exquisite instruments, visually and sound production wise, who added much to the evening's tone supporting the pop/ rock and roll band's traditional outfit of guitars (Edinburgh guitarist **Davie Johnstone** and Detroit-based **Bob Birch**), drums (**John Mahon** from Tennessee), **Kim Bullard** (keyboards) and the picture perfect prim and proper backing vocalists 'the girls' who included none other than **Rose Stone**, the sister of **Sly Stone**, and of course the star of the show at the grand himself.

One of three concerts in Italy and a major stop on the **99 show *Rocket Man: 2010-11 Elton John World Tour***, we had a lively well designed extravaganza from start to finish with songs from the early Elton repertoire, title songs from ***Mad Man Across The Water*** (1971) and "**Goodbye Yellow Brick Road**" (1973), leading the way. "**Sacrifice**" revealed Elton at his most moving and the two song weld "**I Think It's Going To Be A Long Long Time**" and "**Rocket Man**" at his most dramatic.

Of special interest to all were the three new **Leon Russell numbers** from the new album ***The Union***, (Elton's thirtieth studio album and fourth double album, released in **2010**) including the exquisitely shaped slow ballad "**Gone To Shiloh**" based on the American Civil War. With textures infinitely sparer than those previously employed and the emphasis on engaging the listener with drama and sheer emotional power, into these Leon Russell songs Elton John poured much of himself, with the result that they worked appealing to eclectic tastes as well as popular. While Elton John's voice hasn't aged and manner is still youthful, any slackening in the phrasing visible in the old familiars was absent in these new ones which he delivered with aplomb, a special alertness and involvement evident in each rendition.

The softtoned "**Turn On Those Sad Songs**" and the gutsy "**Take Me To The Pilot**", both memorable, had the crowd on their toes. All was visible again with the slow one "**Sorry Seems To Be The Hardest Word**" (with the celebrate verse "What Do I Do To Make You Want Me...") where the cellists, keyboardist and drummer underlined the theme with fervour. The Elton John world famous "**Don't Let The Sun Go Down On Me**" was as effective as always live and "**Are You Ready For Love..Yes, I Am...**" had the band and backing vocalists back again supporting Elton in full force.

"**225**" and "**Crocodile Rock**" had the crowd going from strength to strength, as choristers and placard wavers and foottappers/ dancers, that hardly anyone but myself had realised that the concert had concluded after its encore ("**A Song For You**") without "**Candle In The Wind**", "**Circle Of Life**" or "**Can't You Feel**" from ***Lion King*** performed. All in all, this glimpse of the tour proved to us that Elton John's still going strong not only when it comes to evoking responses thanks to the old hits but also with the touch of class revealed in the performance of the new album's songs.

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Scheda **Titolo completo:**

[Auditorium Parco della Musica](#)

[7]

Fondazione Musica per Roma

Luglio suona bene 2011

The Manhattan Transfer - 28 giugno 2011

Tim Hauser voce

Janis Siegel voce

Cheryl Bentyne voce

Alan Paul voce

Ringo Starr and His All Starr Band - 4 luglio 2011

Rick Derringer chitarra

Richard Page voce e basso

Wally Palmar chitarra

Edgar Winter multistrumentista

Gary Wright piano

Gregg Bissonette batteria

Chicago - 9 luglio 2011

Robert Lamm tastiere, voce

Lee Loughnane tromba

James Pankow trombone

Walt Parazaider fiati

Jason Scheff basso, voce

Tris Imboden batteria

Keith Howland chitarra

Lou Pardini tastiere, voce

Drew Hester percussioni

Elton John and His Band - 13 luglio 2011

Davey Johnstone chitarra e voce

Bob Birch basso e voce

Kim Bullard tastiere

John Mahon percussioni e voce

Nigel Olsson batteria e voce

con la partecipazione di

Luka Sulic violoncello

Stjepan Hauser violoncello

Anno: 2011

Articoli correlati: [Antony. La stella di mare dell'androgino alchemico](#) [8]

[Tricky apre Luglio suona bene. L'evil against evil dello Sprechgesang](#) [9]

- [Musica](#)

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Collegamenti:

[1] <http://www.gothicnetwork.org/immagini/elton-john>

[2] <http://manhattantransfer.net/>

[3] <http://www.binkie.net/wrdisc/index.html>

[4] <http://www.ringostarr.com/>

[5] <http://www.chicagotheband.com/>

[6] <http://web.eltonjohn.com/index.jsp>

[7] <http://www.auditorium.com>

[8] <http://www.gothicnetwork.org/articoli/antony-stella-di-mare-androgino-alchemico>

[9] <http://www.gothicnetwork.org/articoli/tricky-apre-luglio-suona-bene-levil-against-evil-dello-sprechgesang>

