

Former Yes duo of Anderson, Wakeman to make Hanover Theatre stop

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WORCESTER — Having visited the state three months ago as part of a solo tour, Jon Anderson, the former lead singer of Yes, will return as part of another tour upon making a stop at Hanover Theatre on Tuesday, Nov. 8.

This time, though, Anderson has brought company, bringing with him former Yes bandmate Rick Wakeman, with Worcester being the 14th stop on a 16-show tour.

In explaining how this tour is different from his summer tour, Anderson said, “There is totally a different energy, because there is room for instrumentation as (Wakeman) is a great keyboard player and piano player. He also is a great jokester, to where one thinks he wants to be a comedian, so it’s an enjoyable experience for me and everyone has a great time.”

Among one of his more memorable moments on the current tour, according to Anderson, was just last week in New York state at Kleinhans Music Hall in Buffalo on Oct. 26.

With it having been Anderson’s birthday a day earlier, Wakeman led the crowd in an unexpected chorus of a song not on the set list. “People were shouting ‘Happy Birthday,’ and I couldn’t start singing for about half a minute, because everyone was laughing,” said Anderson. “There was a lot of laughter during that show.”

While it is easy to anticipate that many of the songs to be performed at the Hanover Theatre will be from the duo’s days with

Yes, the two last year collaborated on an album, *The Living Tree*, with many of those songs expected to be done as well on the Worcester stage.

“We were originally writing for stage, as I have always been interested in writing on stage,” said Anderson. “That’s why *The Living Tree* works for our tour, as the songs sound very theatrical.”

The inspiration for the album’s songs, noted Anderson, “Relate to the power of nature, and that we live on the Earth, but that we don’t take care of the planet, and we don’t take of ourselves.”

In relation to how “we don’t take care of ourselves,” Anderson highlighted the powerful message behind one of the album’s nine songs, “23/24/11.”

“It relates to a soldier who is fighting in Afghanistan, as he is counting down to the end of his service, so that he can get out,” said Anderson. “War has become an incredible madness, and one where so much money is involved, but the soldiers come back emotionally and physically beaten up.”

In addition to the songs from



Courtesy photo
Former Yes bandmates Rick Wakeman, left, and Jon Anderson, right, on stage during a performance of their current tour, which will make a stop at the Hanover Theatre in Worcester on Tuesday, Nov. 8, beginning at 7:30 p.m.

that album, it would seem a logical extension that the pair also perform some material derived from their three-year stint between 1988 and 1990 as part of

the band, Anderson Bruford Wakeman Howe, which was made up of three now-former and one current member of Yes. To that idea, Anderson said, “We

have done *The Meeting*, but when we do more shows, we will be thinking of doing more songs from that album.”

When asked about the odds that those four might again perform as a group, as it had been rumored earlier this year that three from that quartet might do so, Anderson said, “(Bruford) is not interested, as he doesn’t tour anymore,” but he added, “I have been in touch with (former Yes bandmate) Trevor Rabin, who has an incredible musical knowledge. We have talked about doing a film score, but it will happen when it happens.”

And Yes fans as well should be satisfied by the array of Yes songs also to be performed on the Hanover Theatre stage, Anderson explained.

“(On this tour, some of the songs are ones) we have done with Yes, and written with Yes together, going back to the 1980s,” Anderson said. “That includes a version of ‘Awaken,’ which is about 12 minutes, and it’s wonderful to perform that music as a duo, because it is special.”

Over the 40 years that the two have worked together, they’ve learned much through their various collaborations.

“I think we’ve been both very adventurous, pushing the musical envelope in regard to music creation, as we enjoy making music first and making money second,” said Anderson. “When we do a lot of performances now, though, there is a definite maturity, even as he tells jokes when we’re performing, as we want to perform our songs as well as we can.

Every song is damn important, every part of the song is very important.”

Last year, the duo toured the United Kingdom to support *The Living Tree*, to which the pair quickly recognized the need to plan for doing a tour stateside as well.

“We got a lot of people on Facebook and on our websites saying, ‘When are you coming to America?,’ so I said, ‘We have to come to America, as people are really enjoying it.’”

But even with just two more dates following the Hanover Theatre show, which will begin at 7:30 p.m. and is slated to run two-and-a-half hours, Anderson pointed out the pair already has future plans to perform elsewhere on the globe.

With the current tour having only gone as far west as Milwaukee, Wis., Anderson explained the duo will tour in the west next year, with stops planned in Kansas, Oklahoma and New Mexico.

But such plans will likely go much further beyond this country, as Anderson noted, “We have been offered to go to the Far East, Australia and New Zealand, as people are getting to know that the show is one worth seeing. I can see that the next couple of years we will be traveling around the world doing it.”

For more information or for tickets for the Nov. 8 show at Hanover Theatre, one can either visit the Hanover Theatre website at www.thehanovertheatre.org or call 508-831-0800.

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