Elvis, a 16-year-old and a pizza rat star at Harryween

Harry Styles wraps up his record-setting 30-night Madison Square Garden residency

By CLAIRE FRANKLAND
Editor-in-Chief

"Because the next time we'll be on this stage, I'll be dressed as some sort of…slutty pumpkin," singer-songwriter Harry Styles announced to the crowd during night 28 of his Together, Together residency at Madison Square Garden Oct. 28.

For the average person, you're probably very confused by that statement, but if there's one thing fans of Styles know about his solo career, it's that his Halloween performances will be nothing short of spectacular.

Harryween took place during night 29 (Oct. 30) and night 30 (Oct. 31) of Styles' record-setting 30-night residency at Madison Square Garden, putting the icing on the cake to his nearly 10 weeks in the Big Apple.



CLAIRE FRANKLAND/CHRONICLE

Singer-songwriter Harry Styles concludes his 30-night residency at Madison Square Garden Oct. 31 at Harryween.

For fans of Styles, we know that he does not take Harryween lightly, dressing up in unique costumes with his whole band while putting on a once-in-a-lifetime performance each time.

At the first Harryween in 2021 at MSG, Styles walked on stage in one of his most memorable looks, as Dorothy Gale from the classic "The Wizard of Oz." For his outfit, he went all out, sporting a blue and white gingham dress and the famous ruby-red slippers from the original film. Topping off his performance was a cover of "Somewhere Over the Rainbow," sung by actress Judy Garland in the original film.

At night two of the same residency, Styles took a very different approach, dressed as a white Harlequin clown, an outfit that was topped with many ruffles and face-painted clown makeup.

The next Harryween in 2022 at The Forum in Inglewood, California, saw Styles dressed as Danny Zuko from the iconic 1978 film "Grease." Styles' outfit went all out, rocking a full black outfit with a leather jacket, tight pants, a bedazzled Harryween tee and slicked-back hair. Topping off this Harryween performance was a cover of actress Olivia Newton-John's "Hopelessly Devoted to You," from the film, in honor of the late actress who passed away that August.

This year, despite popular speculation from fans that Styles would appear on stage dressed as late actor Tim Curry from his iconic role in "The Rocky Horror Picture Show" or Jack Skellington from "The Nightmare Before Christmas," none of fans' guesses were remotely close.

Instead, Styles strutted on stage during night one of Harryween, sporting a white pantsuit paired with a satin-lined cape and gold sunglasses, rocking the iconic look of none other than singer Elvis Presley.

While Styles wouldn't sing a cover of one of Presley's songs, Presley's granddaughter, Riley Keough, was spotted in the crowd alongside actress Zoë Kravitz, Styles' rumored fiancée.

Yet, this wouldn't be Styles' lone look of the night.

Styles would go under the stage for a short break during his set, a norm at the MSG residency, only to reappear in a look recreating his 16-year-old X Factor audition look; the audition which ultimately kick-started his career with his former boy band One Direction.

In a white T-shirt covered by a grey cardigan, paired with a yellow scarf, brown khakis and his original X Factor audition number pinned to his shirt, Styles came on stage singing a cover of "Isn't She Lovely" by singer Stevie Wonders, the same song he sang during his audition 16 years ago.

To say fans were shocked truly isn't doing it justice.

Styles played into the costume, referencing iconic lines from his audition such as "I work in a bakery" and "I'm 16." Accompanying Styles on stage was his band, dressed in his iconic eras, including his Coachella, Met Gala and Grammy appearances.

And this was only night one.

At night two of Harryween, no one had any clue what this man could walk on stage in. The possibilities were endless.

As Styles' band made their way onto the stage dressed as different New York City icons, including the Statue of Liberty and a New York Knicks player, tensions rose as to what he would ultimately come on stage dressed as.

And then he walked on stage dressed as a New York City rat holding a big slice of pizza.

You read that right. A New York City pizza rat.

In arguably one of his most iconic looks to date, he danced, jumped and sang across stage dressed in a giant rat costume, even putting ice packs in the suit to keep him cool.

Ultimately, as Styles put it, "I was planning on staying in the rat costume for as long as possible, but my ice packs fell out. And during 'Kiwi' I thought 'I might actually die.' So, I had to pivot."

In ditching the full rat costume, he returned on stage wearing rat ears and a tail, accompanied by a white shirt reading "I am a rat" and his rarely seen shorts.

As the show progressed, Styles' surprise song of the night was a cover of the rock band The Talking Heads' "Psycho Killer," fitting perfectly with the Halloween theme.

Yet, the surprises were not done just yet.

Styles finished singing "Coming up Roses," as New York Knicks point guard Jalen Brunson surprised fans on stage, accompanied by an "MVP" chant.

Brunson congratulated Styles on his 30 nights at MSG and announced the raising of Styles' 30 consecutive nights at the Garden banner, after Styles came to the Knicks banner raising just a few weeks prior.

Finishing the rest of the show with "Sign of the Times" and "Aperture," Styles simply could not get himself to leave stage, staying on for an extra 15 minutes while he cried and had a celebratory pizza party with his band.

"You've changed my life over and over again, and I get to remember every moment in here," Styles said.

'Wild Horse Nine' is well worth a watch

By JAMES NOLAN
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Director Martin McDonagh has quietly become one of the most prolific directors in modern Hollywood. "Wild Horse Nine" is just his sixth film and fifth feature. His past works include "In Bruges," "Seven Psychopaths," "Three Billboards Outside Ebbing, Missouri" and "The Banshees of Inisherin."

Those movies have been nominated for a combined 18 Oscars, winning three, including McDonagh's win for Best Live-Action Short Film at the 2006 ceremony for "Six Shooter."

"Wild Horse Nine" is everything that has made his past work so great. It is funny, authentic, easily palatable and most importantly, features a great script elevated by great actors.

One thing that McDonagh's films always do is establish a confined setting and repeat locations in such a fashion that you grow accustomed to the place and truly feel immersed in the world of the film. He's previously taken his viewers to Bruges, Belgium; the fictional town of Ebbing, Missouri and the fictional Irish isle of Inisherin.

Now he takes us to Easter Island, and keeps the film there as he repeats sets. The hotel restaurant, the rooms within the hotel, the "big heads" (indigenously called the moai). Every time he brings the script to a place it has already visited, he is creating a more and more immersive experience because the audience can start to feel the world that the characters live in.

Then, there are the performances. The leads in "Wild Horse Nine" are actors John Malkovich and Sam Rockwell, both of whom have put themselves on the Academy Awards radar.

Malkovich plays Chris, a retiring CIA officer in the final stages of a battle with a terminal illness. Rockwell won the Oscar for Best Actor in a Supporting Role for his performance in "Three Billboards Outside Ebbing, Missouri." His character's name is Lee, also a CIA officer who is Chris' protege.

The chemistry these two have is palpable. A good portion of this movie is dialogue-centric between Lee and Chris, which on paper could be really boring, but the translation of the script to the screen is magic.

There's also an element of the 1937 tragic novella "Of Mice and Men" that plays out between Lee and Chris. More than just Malkovich happening to also play Lenny in the 1992 film, there are similar themes. The more capable Lee is the only one to care for and look after Chris, who is rapidly declining cognitively.

Malkovich's performance is a delirious, forgetful old man who slips between being deceitful and earnest halfway through. Despite his deteriorating state and blood-filled background, the portrayal of Chris is not unlike the memory of your grandfather, compelling the audience to sympathize with him. His matter-of-fact delivery on some of his more outlandish statements, combined with Rockwell's Lee playing into his antics just enough to be annoyed and charmed, is an absolute treat to watch.

The product is hilarious. It stands out as one of the funnier movies put in theatres all year. Not in a cheap, slapstick type of humor, but through the use of dialogue coated with authenticity. Lee and Chris aren't just telling jokes to invoke laughter. The humor is derived much the same way you'd laugh with your friends around the dinner table: because what they are saying is genuinely funny.

As funny and genuine as this movie is, "Wild Horse Nine" is just as visually breathtaking. There are shots that look like paintings. Beautiful landscapes of Easter Island with a comparatively ant-sized Lee and Chris looking like a mere afterthought, tucked into the bottom of the frame, a tiny speck of a bigger image.

These spectacular images are brought to your eye thanks to director of photography Ben Davis.

This is the fourth consecutive collaboration between McDonagh and Davis. Those ultra-wide landscape shots are his bread-and-butter. It gives the viewer such a sense of the tone of the film. Stormy Ireland, the turmoil in Missouri and now a seemingly calm Easter Island pop through the screen because of the magic Davis creates with the camera.

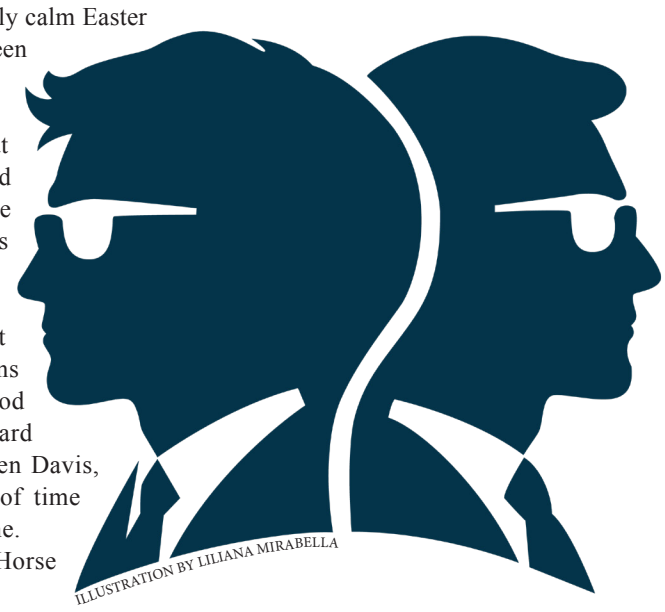
It's a travesty that Davis has not yet received even a nomination at the Academy Awards for his cinematography. With "The Banshees of Inisherin," McDonagh's most recent film, going 0-9 on nominations on trophy night, Hollywood is surely looking to reward this one. Learn the name Ben Davis, because it's only a matter of time before he's a household name.

The final piece of "Wild Horse Nine" that truly makes it a masterpiece is the role that the moai play in the story.

In the last 15 minutes, Chris gives warning of an impending coup in Chile, begging a young woman to escape both Easter Island and the country as a whole.

When she asks where to go, Malkovich delivers a monologue bound to put him in Oscar talks. He recommends finding a beach and a gun, running towards the sand and facing the treeline, ready to attack when they come looking for her, because her hair will look better in the wind when she dies.

Which is, of course, exactly the situation the statues are in. Wind at their back, eyes on the trees, not facing the beach. It's also the last spot where we see Chris, among the moai statues. I think it's so profound that even these mystical carvings of unknown origin can also not escape the mortal problems created by humanity.



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