Olivia Rodrigo kicks off her 'Unraveled' tour in Connecticut

By ISABELLE PEPIN
Contributing Writer

On Sept. 25, singer-songwriter Olivia Rodrigo began her "Unraveled" tour at PeoplesBank Arena in Hartford, Connecticut. The venue completed a large renovation last year, increasing the capacity for concerts to around 20,500. Rodrigo's tour is based on her newest album, "You Seem Pretty Sad for a Girl So in Love," featuring hit singles like "Drop Dead" and "The Cure."

The tour features a lot of eye-catching visuals, including hundreds of pink flowers covering the stage. Throughout the concert, the seasons change, causing some flowers to be added to and removed from the stage. The London-based rock band Wolf Alice opened Rodrigo's two shows in Hartford. Rodrigo started on stage with her hit "Drop Dead" and featured a variety of songs from all three of her albums.

Rodrigo's setlist represented different stages of her music career, beginning with her debut album "SOUR," released in 2021 and continuing through "GUTS," released in 2023, and her newest album. The tour comes nearly three years after the release of "GUTS" and marks the beginning of a new era for Rodrigo.


ILLUSTRATION BY SYDNEY DUNN-KRAUS

Rodrigo's path to the "Unraveled" tour began years before she stepped onto the Hartford stage. She first gained attention as an actor, starring in the Disney Channel comedy show "Bizaardvark," beginning in 2016. Following "Bizaardvark," Rodrigo continued her Disney career with her role as Nini in "High School Musical: The Musical: The Series," beginning in 2019.

It was through "High School Musical: The Musical: The Series" where she began getting recognition for her music. Her song "All I Want," which was featured in the series, became popular before she released her first single, "driver's license," Jan. 8, 2021.

This song immediately blew up all over social media platforms due to the speculation that this song was about actor Joshua Bassett, who played Rickey, the love interest of Nini in "High School Musical: The Musical: The Series." About four months later, she released "SOUR" May 21, 2021, beginning a music career that would eventually lead to three Grammy awards: Best New Artist, Best Pop Vocal Album ("SOUR") and Best Pop Solo Performance (song "drivers license").

Her newest album, "You Seem Pretty Sad for a Girl So in Love," continues that progression, focusing on the emotions surrounding the feelings of begging for, having and losing love. Rodrigo commented at her second show in Hartford that the first song she made on the album,"Honeybee," was a love song about her ex-boyfriend, actor Louis Partridge.

The album features 13 songs, including a collaboration song with singer-songwriter Robert Smith called "what's wrong with me." Smith is an English musician and co-founder of the band "The Cure."

The tour also included a partnership with Headcount, a voter registration organization, to promote and educate fans on how to check their voter registration and to encourage them to use their voice and vote.

Being a Rodrigo fan for a while, I had never seen her in concert. Every tour I had attempted to get tickets for, they sold out every time. After trying to get tickets to her "Unraveled" tour multiple times and failing, I lost hope that I would see her live in concert due to high resale prices and sold-out shows.

On opening night in Hartford, I scoured online looking for tickets for the Saturday show. Resale tickets on websites such as "StubHub" or "SeatGeek" with limited or obstructed views were still going for over $200, which isn't reasonable for my wallet as a college student. At 11:30 p.m. the night before the show, I came across two obstructed-view tickets on AXS for only around $70 each.

The tour was so magical, from someone who has been a fan for so long. Rodrigo put on a great show with the perfect setlist, spanning all the different musical eras of her life.

Marvel sneaks a 'Doomsday' warning in the 'Endgame' credits

By ANTHONY ANGELILLO
Copy Editor

On Sept. 25, Marvel Studios brought "Avengers: Endgame" back to theaters. Six years after its original release. The encore edition would add four new scenes that the original 2019 film did not include.

Each scene points to "Avengers: Doomsday," which is set to release Dec. 18. The four-minute footage was shot during the production of "Doomsday." So for every movie fan out there, let's break down each scene to prepare you for this year's Holiday Blockbuster.

FIRST SCENE

We jump right back to the final scene in "Endgame," where Steve Rogers, played by actor Chris Evans, and Peggy Carter, played by actress Hayley Atwell, share their long-awaited dance before being interrupted by a knock on the door.

Steve gets out of sight as Peggy opens the door to find Loki, played by actor Tom Hiddleston, wearing his Time Variance Authority (TVA) jacket. Peggy asks if she can help, and he answers, "No, but I can help you. Both of you."

Loki's timing makes sense under TVA rules. By staying in the past, Steve is living in a reality that was never his, and Loki is there to warn Steve before the agency comes after him.

The first "Doomsday" teaser showed Steve holding a newborn, so whatever Loki offers seems to buy the couple some time.

Loki himself sounds like he is trying to protect a family, not recruit a soldier. The first full "Doomsday" trailer shows Steve with a TVA card marked with the Yggdrasil tree from the second season finale of "Loki."

Marvel fans are now speculating if the old Rogers we see at the end of "Endgame" still reaches that bench to hand his shield to Sam Wilson, played by actor Anthony Mackie.

SECOND SCENE

We now get a look at the aftermath of "Spider-Man: Brand New Day," involving Bruce Banner, played by actor Mark Ruffalo. In that film, Jean Grey, played by actress Sadie Sink, slipped into Banner's mind and separated him from his inhibitor, setting the Hulk loose.

Banner has since sealed himself in a bunker two miles underground with the military's help, recording a log about a new gamma serum meant to keep the Hulk in check. The lights then flicker, and the voice of actor Robert Downey Jr.'s Doctor Doom says he has come to collect Banner. Banner starts to get angry, and by the end, only Doom's glowing green runes remain on the floor.

The runes seem to tie to Latveria, Doom's home country and to the sorcery Doom practices in the comics. Marvel fans also note that Banner's gray beard resembles Mastro, an evil alternate version of the Hulk.

Finally, the glitching video in Bruce's bunker matches the glitch in the "Spider-Man: Brand New Day" post-credit scene, where Ned's tracker shows Peter Parker, played by actor Tom Holland, suddenly pulled into space, and film theorists believe both scenes point toward Battleworld and "Avengers: Secret Wars."

Whose side the Hulk is on is the real mystery. It could lead to the Hulk fighting for Doom. However, Ruffalo is not on the cast list Marvel released at D23 in August. This doesn't mean he is not in the movie, but it does raise questions about how the Hulk will be featured in "Doomsday."

THIRD SCENE

Miss Minutes opens the scene by telling everyone to stay in their own universe, "so we don't have to hunt you down like a dog."

Mobius, played by actor Owen Wilson, walks into work beneath a wall tribute naming Loki the TVA's "Employee of All Time."

Alarms then go off, and we see Earth-10005, home of the Fox "X-Men" films, collide with Earth-1127, a world Marvel has not identified. The planets fire missiles at each other, and the count of lost universes races into the thousands before O.B., played by actor Ke Huy Quan, says the multiverse is collapsing.


ILLUSTRATION BY ANTHONY ANGELILLO

The X-Men universe was planned to be wiped out in "Deadpool & Wolverine" by TVA's Mr. Paradox because their Wolverine was dead.

The missiles also come straight from writer Jonathon Hickman's comics, where the only way to survive an incursion is to destroy the other Earth first.

Marvel fans spotted the universes of 2003's "Hulk," 2015's "Fantastic Four" and the "What If…?" reality where Peggy became Captain Carter already destroyed. Now, one Peggy has lost her world while Loki knocks on another Peggy's door. This feels very deliberate, Marvel.

Marvel says "Doomsday" sends heroes from three universities crashing together, and its D23 cast list includes Fox-era X-Men actors Patrick Stewart and Ian McKellen, who play Professor Charles Xavier (Professor X) and Erik Lehnsherr (Magneto). If the X-Men are firing on other Earths, they may see the Avengers as just another threat.

FOURTH SCENE

The original "Endgame" had no post-credits scene, only the clang of a hammer on the metal that Marvel fans tied to Tony Stark building his first Iron Man suit in 2008's "Iron Man."

"Encore" keeps the clang but cuts to Doom forging his own mask, ending with Doom looking up, similar to the "Doomsday" trailers.

In Doom's classic comic origins, monks in the Himalayas forged his armor and writer John Byrne later added that Doom ordered the mask onto his face while it was still hot.

Downey plays both men, and fan theories include thinking Doom is a version of Stark from another reality. Others argue the scene changes nothing for the overall plot and helps Marvel sell Doom as part of the design from the start.

PREPARING FOR "DOOMSDAY"

Do not expect any of these four scenes to return in "Doomsday." Co-director Joe Russo confirmed this, saying the new scenes were only meant to bridge the two films. He also said some lines from the original "Endgame," not the new footage, will be paid off in "Doomsday."

Marvel fans may have already found one, with the Steve teaser flashing a code that some decoded as the 1:24:20 mark of "Endgame," during the rooftop scene where the Ancient One warns Banner that taking an Infinity Stone can split off a new reality.

Marvel has not confirmed the theory, but when you consider that Steve waited a lifetime for that dance, Marvel fans, including myself, can wait until Dec. 18 to learn why Loki disrupted Rogers' perfect reality.