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Greg Lake plays Capitol Theatre

King Crimson, ELP founding member shares Songs of a Lifetime

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CLEARWATER – Greg Lake brings his Songs of a Lifetime tour to Clearwater Saturday and Monday, April 28 and 30, 7:30 p.m., 7:30 p.m., at Capitol Theatre, 405 Cleveland St.

Tickets range from \$39 to \$69. Call 791-7400 or visit www.rutheckerdhall.com.

Lake plans to deliver something more than just a concert featuring his greatest hits.

Songs of a Lifetime is designed as an intimate autobiographical musical journey in song and story. Included are many of the best-known songs from his tenure with King Crimson and Emerson Lake and Palmer as well as storyteller style commentary by Lake about his entire life and career.

Those listening to the radio back in late 1969 might have heard Lake's distinctive vocals on King Crimson's first single, "The Court of the Crimson King."

Then again, the track wasn't conducive to frequent airplay: The full album version of the song clocks in at around nine minutes. It reached No. 80 on U.S. charts. The song and the album, though, helped open a door to a new style of rock: "In the Court of the Crimson King" became a landmark in the emerging progressive rock movement.

Lake's involvement in King Crimson helped launch his legendary career.

Lake cofounded King Crimson with guitarist Robert Fripp. Lake served as both lead vocalist and bass guitarist for King Crimson's debut album. "In Court of the Crimson King," co-produced by Lake, featured the iconic song "21st Century Schizoid Man," and helped usher in an era of progressive rock that would define bands such as Yes and Genesis.

While touring with King Crimson, Lake befriended Keith Emerson of The Nice, another early English progressive rock band best known for their signature blend of rock, jazz and classical music. The two would soon form their own celebrated prog-rock outfit, along with a third partner.

Before parting ways with King Crimson, Lake provided vocals for the band's second album, "In the Wake of Poseidon," released in 1970. The album featured the single "Cat Food" as well as the 11-minute "The Devil's Triangle."

That same year, Emerson and Lake tapped drummer Carl Palmer of The Crazy World of Arthur Brown



Photo courtesy of PARADISE ARTISTS
Greg Lake brings his Songs of a Lifetime tour to Capitol Theatre April 28 and 30.

and Atomic Rooster to complete the lineup of their group: Emerson, Lake & Palmer. The trio would go on to create unique live theatrical performances which "stretched the imagination and enthralled audiences," as Lake's website biography describes it.

The band's 1971 debut album, "Emerson Lake and Palmer" went platinum. It was produced by Lake and featured one of his most memorable songs, "Lucky Man." "Lucky Man," performed on acoustic guitar, would become an iconic song for the band and a popular classic on radio.

"I am both a bass guitarist and guitarist," Lake explains on his website biography. "A lot of the really good bass players also play guitar. McCartney and Sting, for example, both play guitar and I certainly grew up on it."

Lake originally took up the bass guitar while in King Crimson, since Fripp handled all the guitar work. In taking on the bass guitar, Lake pioneered a new way of playing it.

"I derived a great deal of enjoyment playing bass partly – I think – because I played it in a different way from most people at the time," Lake says on his website. "The style I developed was a more percussive and more sustained approach, which almost certainly came from all my years on guitar. I was frustrated by the normal dull sound of bass guitars at the time and was searching for a more expressive sound. I discovered the key was to use the wire-wound bass strings, which have far more sustain, rather like the low end of a Steinway Grand Piano. I think I was the first bass player to really use them in this way."

Ironically, it was Lake's acoustic guitar that provided the backdrop for the ballads ELP and Lake made famous. In fact, Lake composed songs such as "C'est la vie," "From the Beginning," "Still You turn me On," "Watching Over You," "Lucky Man" and "I Believe in Father Christmas" so he could play the guitar with ELP and still contribute the electric bass that paired so well with Emerson's explosive keyboards and Palmer's volatile percussion.

Emerson, Lake & Palmer followed their debut album with a string of successful albums through the 1970s, including "Tarkus" (1971), "Pictures at an Exhibition" (1971), "Trilogy" (1972), "Brain Salad Surgery" (1973), "Works Volume 1" (1977) and "Works Volume 2" (1977).

In 1985, Lake reunited with Emerson and brought in drummer Cozy Powell for "Emerson, Lake & Powell." In 1992, the original trio reunited for the studio album "Black Moon" which was followed by the band's last studio album to date, "In the Hot Seat," released in 1994.

At the Capitol Theatre shows, Lake will take the audience on a journey through his prolific life in such a way that they feel as if they are part of the journey. The carefully selected song list will also feature songs by other artists that have influenced Lake's musical career over the years. Unique recollections of such greats as Ringo Starr, Jimi Hendrix and Elvis are skillfully woven throughout the performance.

"There is no doubt about the fact, that both in terms of the theater and in the musical arts, the concept of performing an intimate and autobiographical show presents a huge challenge," Lake said in a press release announcing the Songs of a Lifetime Tour. "My experience of this format last tour was so invigorating still gives me a thrill every time I think about it. So intriguing were the shows on the last tour, that I could not help but think about repeating the experience and giving audiences an even more in depth look at my musical influences and sing to them as

I tell them about the songs. The questions they ask are often surprising and prompt unusual moments that people speak about for months later."

Lake's dialog with the audience throughout the show will create moments of high impact and contrasting personal intimacy, all of which have been the hallmark of Lake's career. Containing everything from humor right through to moments of high drama, all elements will combine to give the audience an intimate insight into one of the most outstanding and recognizable voices of our generation.

"On the one hand the show is a nostalgic journey through some of the music the audience has known and shared with me over the years and on the other it is a revelation," Lake said. "The audience and I have created an intimate and unusual experience together. However, at the end of the night the most important of all is that the audience always feels they have been entertained and enriched by the whole experience."

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