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Steven Wilson Talks Bringing 'To the Bone' From the Royal Albert Hall to Your Home



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Steven Wilson

When did prog-rock mastermind Steven Wilson realize he wanted to make a concert film documenting his current tour? Actually, he didn't.

"Since the age of DVD and cheaper filming technology, it's become standard for bands to make a studio album and shoot a live DVD, then make another studio

album and make a Blu-ray,” he says. “It’s almost part of the album cycle, and there’s too many of them out there. Most of them are pretty generic and similar.”

Thankfully, an offer from Eagle Rock to film in his favorite venue and the opportunity for more people to see the tour in support of 2017 release *To the Bone* resulted in *Home Invasion: In Concert at the Royal Albert Hall*, which will be released Nov. 2. Recorded on the final evening of a three-night stand at the London concert hall, the two-and-a-half-hour concert film -- Wilson’s first in six years and second as a solo artist -- ultimately made sense for him to document because of the work he put into the production.

“This *To the Bone* show is something I’m really proud of, and I spent so much time preparing it and planning it,” he says. And after thinking about it, Wilson realized that even though he’s continuing to tour in support of the album, there are many fans in markets that he may never make it to that deserved to see a live representation of it. “You’re making it for people that will never get to see the real thing,” he says. “People won’t have the opportunity to see the concert in the flesh, if you will.”

And again, the 147-year-old venue played a large part in why Wilson finally decided to film *Home Invasion*. He says Eagle Rock had a particular concept for it, and one idea was that they wanted to do it at the Royal Albert Hall.

“It’s a venue I feel very comfortable in; I’ve played there seven or eight times. I always feel good onstage there,” says Wilson. “I feel like there’s a balance between the spectacle and scale of that venue, but it also feels quite intimate, and I feel quite connected to the audience. That made their proposition very appealing, and I thought to myself that if I’m going to do it, this is the place to do it, and this is the time to do it, and I’m really happy with the way it came out.”

Filming after two days of performing gave the band and camera crew time to familiarize themselves with each other and the venue, which Wilson thinks removed a lot of pressure. He recalls that when he has filmed DVDs and Blu-rays in the past, there was so much pressure riding on the show “that very often you get nervous and self-conscious, and it doesn’t always come out the way you’d like. We’d already done the show two nights running in that same room. We knew how it sounded, we knew how it felt to be onstage in front of that crowd. I have to say that it was one of the more pleasant experiences I’ve had of shooting a concert film in the sense that it was relaxed and I didn’t have that sense of self-consciousness.”

Wilson and the band were also more comfortable because some of the close-ups and angles were shot on the day of the recording. “There were some songs I performed behind a transparent gauze so we could create holograms and things like that,” he explains. “So it would’ve been very difficult for the cameras to get

close to the musicians when they're being stopped by a literal and physical barrier. In that case, we did all of the songs at a sound check during the day so they could have those angles. It was something Eagle Rock really thought about beforehand so there wasn't that kind of intrusion during the show, and it comes off in the performance."

The result of *Home Invasion* is a career-spanning set that Wilson was involved with post-production. "As a songwriter and person that puts the show on, there are certain details that I'm always going to be conscious of that perhaps even someone very involved in the project might miss," he says. "Being the control freak that I am, there were things that I wanted to make sure were captured by the camera and captured in the edit. I also encouraged the guys at Eagle Rock to be quite cinematic with the way they thought about the film. I didn't want a straightforward, detached presentation of the show."

Given his hesitance to make concert films, one might assume that Wilson's not an avid watcher of them. They'd be right. "I can't say I'm someone that watches a lot of concert films," he says when asked to name his favorites. "Obviously, over the years I've seen some. My favorite by far is still *Pink Floyd: Live at Pompeii*, partially because it's not filmed in front of an audience, and the setting becomes part of the fabric of the film. One of the reasons I've been reticent over the years to film a concert film is that there are too many of them out there already. I saw a Nine Inch Nails one a few years ago that was very impressive. At the end of the day, that's all you can say about a live concert film: You can get the feeling of how spectacular and how magical it was on that night, and hopefully, that's something this captures."

Unlike some acts that release concert films, Wilson will be able to promote *Home Invasion* during the same tour in which it was filmed; the trek is returning to North America, as well as visiting Australia, New Zealand, Japan and Europe. (For a complete list of tour dates, [go here](#).) "In a way, this album's been a victim of its own success," he says. "I'm getting more and more requests to present the show, and it's going to be amazing going to Japan and Australia for the first time on this album cycle. I'm doing 10 more shows in Canada, and I've never done that many shows in Canada before."

Meanwhile, Wilson is already beginning to think about the follow-up for *To the Bone*'s album cycle. "I'm in the stage that I pretentiously refer to as my research and development phase," he says. "Basically, what that means is that I'm looking for a direction I want to go in. I'm always very committed to the idea that every album has to have a reason to exist in the catalog. There's no reason for me to make *To the Bone* part two. It's a question of finding the musical vocabulary of the next album. I don't want to think too much about it. It's the early days, but I'm getting there."