

Corey's Top 10 2017 Concerts

As 2017 ends and we look forward to 2018, I share my top ten concerts for the past year. This represents the seventh installment in this “series.”

This past year, my wife was again my partner at all but two concerts I review this year. Shelly's presence again indicated a predominance of weekend and summer shows this past year. It also followed the previous year's pattern of fewer shows overall, but thinking back to professional obligations over much of the year, shows I penciled in but could not get to made some sense. Still when shows several featured multiple artists who could headline in their own right it certainly gave a sense of attending double the actually number of concerts – especially considering the quality of the shows. Another interesting factoid: my first and last shows this year featured my talented friend (and matrimonial attorney-extraordinaire) Curt Arnel on drums.

1) Few who know this correspondent fail to know my fave all time band and how I argue no band called Eagles could exist if not for Poco. Indeed I passed up my weekly Tuesday night full-court game to travel out of state to the South Orange Performing Arts Center (aka SOPAC), New Jersey to experience perhaps a great testimony of my “argument.” Long-time Eagles bassist Timothy B. Schmit headlined a show which his mentor, Poco founder and Rock and Roll Hall of Famer (with Buffalo Springfield) Richie Furay opened. Richie's set opened with *Pickin' Up The Pieces* from the first Poco LP of the same name, before Tim joined the band (replacing Randy Meisner who he later replaced in Eagles). It also include a sweet rendition of the Springfield classic *Kind Woman* and his newer composition about Poco's story, *We Were The Dreamers*. Tim's performed a mix of his recent solo songs including *One More Mile*, *The Shadow* and *Friday Night*. He dedicated Eagles classic *Peaceful Easy Feeling* to the departed Glenn Frey who has described the song as an attempt to replicate a Poco feel. He sounded like 1972 and 1974 when he performed his Poco compositions, *I Can See Everything* and *Keep On Tryin'*. His set also included lovely versions of his Eagles hits, *I Can't Tell You Why* and *Love Will Keep Us Alive*. Richie joined Tim for the final encore, an incredible version of Richie's signature Poco tune, *A Good Feelin' To Know*.” I left with so big a smile on my face and a poster signed by Richie! Date: May 9).

2) At dinner with a rather large group friends the day after Thanksgiving, a friend of Shelly's called me out when my wife shared our plans to see Squeeze the following weekend rather than be free to attend some arts show wherever.... I do not believe our friend who with her hubby has attended many shows with us ever experienced Squeeze. Indeed every Squeeze show stands out as a special experience and perhaps the best venues to see and experience this great band feature no seats on the floor. After all, Chris Difford and Glenn Tilbrook encourage their audience to get up and dance – easy to

do when no seats get in the way. The opened with a new song, *Please be Upstanding* followed by (David Letterman's fave) *Pulling Mussels From the Shell*. Their set featured some other new songs like *Cradle to the Grave* (with Glen on ukulele) and some great versions of *Hourglass*, *Annie Get Your Gun* and *Tempted*. And the encore, *Is That Love* and the piece de resistance, *Black Coffee in Bed*. Can it get any better? Venue: The Paramount in Huntington, December 2.

3) The night Poco recorded their 1970 Carnegie Hall concert for their DeLIVERrin' LP they shared the venue with The Moody Blues who toured this year in commemoration of their 1967 landmark LP, "Days of Future Passed." 50 years and the songs remain fresh and vital, including *Tuesday Afternoon* and *Nights in White Satin*. The Moodies performed Days.... in its entirety in the 2nd set. The first set included a good mix of their other well-known songs, opening with I'm Just a Singer In A Rock and Roll and concluding with one of my personal faves, *The Story In Your Eyes*. The Encore featured the obligatory and my fave Moody tune, *Question and Ride My See-Saw*. Venue: Jones Beach, July 12.

4) *The Gregg Allman Laidback Festival* lives on in this stalwart's memory. The performers: Jackson Browne, Steve Winwood, Peter Wolff, Garland Jeffries, Scott Sharrard who played lead guitar in Gregg's band, and surviving Allman drummer Jai Johanny Johanson's Jasz Band. Certainly another show which could be several stand alone concerts. Jackson closed a spirited show which included a cover of Allman's Melissa and his own These Days that Gregg covered as a solo artist. Other highlights *Take It Easy*, *Running On Empty* and *Rock Me On The Water*. Steve Winwood played in three great bands and enjoys a nice solo career; his set represented that variety opening and closing with his Spencer David Group hits, "I'm A Man and Gimme Some Lovin'". In between he covered *Can't Find My Way Home* and *Had To Cry Today* from Blind Faith (his supergroup with Eric Clapton and Ginger Baker), Traffic classics *The Low Spark of High Heeled Boys*, my all time fave, *Empty Pages*, and *Dear Mr. Fantasy*, and solo hit *Higher Love*. The voice of the J. Geils Band performed the band's hits and classics concluding with *Love Stinks* and *Lookin' For A Love*. I particularly enjoyed, *Must of Got Lost*. Venue: Jones Beach, September 23.

5) The first of two festivals we attended this summer, Great South Bay Music Festival in Patchogue Park, drew us to Poco led by original member Rusty Young and Winwood's Traffic mate, Dave Mason. Throw in Jesse Colin Young and Aztec Two Step and it's easy to argue a four for one. Dave performed his biggest solo hit, We Just Disagree and covered Traffic and several cuts from "Alone Together," one of the best LPs one can make, including *World In Changes*, *Look At Me Look At You*, *Shouldn't Have Took More Than You Gave* and my fave Mason tune, *Only You Know and I Know*. He closed with his Traffic classic, *Feelin' Alright* which the late Joe Cocker made more famous. Poco covered its hits Call It Love from its 1989 reunion, Rusty's Crazy Love and former

member Paul Cotton's Heart Of The Night with long-time bassist Jack Sundrud on vocals. Jesse Colin Young performed Get Together and other songs including Darkness, Darkness. Date: July 16.

6) In the year of Poco, Shelly took me for my birthday to see its co-founder better known for his work with Kenny Loggins. Jim Messina played a set that covered his career in Buffalo Springfield, Poco, Loggins and Messina and as a solo artist. He covered Furay's Springfield tunes, A Child's Claim To Fame and Kind Woman, both of which Poco reprised on DeLIVERin. His also reprised his great Poco tune, You Better Think Twice and the inspirational Follow Your Dreams from the 1989 reunions LP. Of course he closed with his Loggins and Messina hit, Your Mama Don't Dance.. Be Free Angry Eyes were particular highlights. Venue: B.B. King's, October 8.

7) A new tradition is a Broadway musical on Shelly's day. With Rock and Roll as the inspiration, we enjoyed Cindy Lauper's Kinky Boots. The book worked but the music and lyrics reflected the She's So Unusual feel that introduced us to Ms. Lauper. Venue: The Al Hirschfeld Theatre, October 14

8-9) Off the board walk in Coney Island, Drummer extraordinaire Carl Palmer's ELP Legacy featured the orchestral rock he pioneered with the late great keyboardist Keith Emerson and also departed bassist-singer Greg Lake. Very glad we still get to hear the music live and loud. From their cover of Aaron Copland's *Hoedown* (of course to continue the Poco allusion, Poco has its own original song by that name) to *Karn Evil #9* (Welcome Back my friends....) to Lake's *Lucky Man* and closing with Copland's *Fanfare for the Common Man*. And that was just an opening. Todd Rundgren than performs an eclectic set starting with *Come, Truth and Rise* and of course, *Hello It's Me*. Yes follows with songs covering most of its storied career. Highlights include *Yours Is No Disgrace*, *And You And I* and final encore, *Roundabout*. Venue: Ford Amphitheater, Coney Island, August 11.

10) Visiting mom is south Florida, I never expected to find concerts. There were two. One was part of the All Star Futures game. The other was a great 4th of July concert outdoors at the BB&T Center, the Sunrise, Florida home of the Panthers hockey team. The Romantics certainly made the drive worthwhile opening with *When I Look in Your Eyes*, covering the Animals *We Gotta Get Out of This Place* and the Kinks' *She's Got Everything*. Of course the highlights were their own *Talking in Your Sleep* and *What I Like About You*. Though I thought of them as a novelty Band, The Baha Men proved their were more than Who Let The Dogs Out. While their material was not otherwise familiar, I enjoyed their playing including a Hendrix arrangement of The Star Spangled Banner.

Honorable mention: My brother Robby in from Portland during the holiday break from

his day job as a teacher performed three songs at my friend Curt's Christmas eve Jam at K.J. Farrells. He sandwiched playing guitar on *The Thrill is Gone* and *Crossroads* with his vocals and guitar on *I Fought The Law*.