

Corey's Top 10 2018 Concerts

As 2018 ends and we look forward to 2019, I share my top ten concerts for the past year. This represents the eighth installment in this “series.”

This past year, my wife and I joined for six of shows that I include this year. I averaged almost two shows a month (I'd prefer more.) Several – including many good ones not on this list – featured multiple artists who could headline in their own right; that certainly made the overall experience closer to the feel attending something 30 to 40 shows when the actual number of shows totaled 23. The other nice factoid because it rarely works out that way involved how many shows (including a few not reviewed here) involved real faves of this commentator; this includes probably the five top artists I follow (though in three cases not with the original bands that caused me to follow their music.

1) I grew up loving the music of Creedence Clearwater Revival. That means songs written, and/ or arranged, produced and sung by one John C. Fogerty. Those songs rock and the solo stuff just follow with the standard John set with CCR. His band is great and includes his son Shane on 2nd guitar. Indeed, family seemed to be a common theme in a number of great shows I took in this year. It was certainly the best performance I ever experienced to date (and I [blogged](#) as such), not just by John, and no offense to other artists who really sang and played their hearts out at other shows I saw. And this AMAZING show included more than just John Fogerty; it also included a full set by ZZ Top. Really. They played powerfully. It was fun. Top's Billy Gibbons joined Fogerty and his band on a great new song, “The Holy Grail.” Fogerty's large catalogue of songs always leaves him open to leaving something out but no lover of CCR and his solo stuff can complain about a set that includes both “Rain” songs, “Up Around The Bend,” “Down on the Corner,” “Fortunate Son,” “Bad Moon Rising,” “Centerfield,” “Travelin' Band,” “Born on the Bayou” and the iconic “Proud Mary.” ZZ Top highlights included “Legs,” “La Grange” and “Tush.” Venue, Jones Beach, June 20

2) Who out there that know this correspondent fail to know about Poco as my fave all time band; and you probably heard me argue no band called Eagles (more on them later) could exist if not for this iconic band that truly belongs in the Rock and Roll Hall of fame. The L.A. version of this performance which my daughter attended a few weeks later included long-time Eagles bassist Timothy B. Schmit. Billed as The Richie Furay Band performs POCO DeLIVERin' as part of the 50th Anniversary of Poco coming together and performing in Los Angeles, the show at the new and improved My Father's Place in Roslyn, involved another family affair. Poco (and Buffalo Springfield co-) founder Richie headlines a band that includes his daughter Jesse Lynch on backing vocals and Guitarist Scott Sellen and song Aaron on bass. The band lead off just as the

short Springfield reunion shows did with Richie replicating his great lead vocal on Neil Young's "On The Way Home." The rest of the first set mixed more Springfield and Poco classics with Richie's solo work, including a song about Poco, "We Were The Dreamers," and Jesse Lynch's beautiful rendition of current Poco bassist Jack Sundrud's "Hard Country." The Second Set featured DeLIVERin' in its entirety. You can find some great live performances on line from the show my daughter attended a few weeks later. And a powerful version of the Poco classic, "A Good Feelin' to Know," served as the perfect encore. I [blogged](#) about both shows on November 18; it includes links to much of the music played live; check it out. Date: October 25.

3) Three major artists including my fave voice who fronted two great bands, Free and Bad Company, not to mention The Firm with Jimmy Page. You know it would be special. But the fact Paul Rodgers put together a band called Free Spirit to play a set that would feature songs from his Free catalogue made this show even more special. Most know "All Right Now," which I call my fave song. The set included such Free classics as "Wishing Well," "Fire and Water" and "The Stealer." Add to that Bad Company hits such as "Can't Get Enough," "Movin' On," and "Ready for Love." Oh but there's more: Guitarist extraordinaire Jeff Beck who performed a mix of his catalogue including Jimi Hendrix's "Little Wing" and the Beatles' "A Day In The Life." And like one of those late night TV offers, here's more, Heart lead singer Ann Wilson performed a set of covers that she released on her latest Album. Check out if you can Ann's take of The Who's "The Real Me" and "Won't Get Fooled Again," and Lesley Gore's "You Don't Own Me;" she did not ignore her Heart catalogue belting out a wonderful "Barracuda." Date: August 14.

4) Since it opened at the end of June, I really wanted to check out the new My Father's Place. My first show there was special, and not just as a family affair. I [reviewed](#) it as part of my August 19 Gotham Sunday blog. It featured Glenn Tilbrook, primary lead vocalist and guitarist extraordinaire from Squeeze. I wrote, "Apart from attending one heck of a performance including an opening set from teenage Leon Tilbrook who sounds like his dad, the entire MFP experience exceeded expectations...No doubt my current fave place to take in a show." Just as Squeeze shows exemplify audience participation, Glenn's fans that eve "handled" the vocal parts of the "missing" band members on such numbers as my fave Squeeze tune, "Black Coffee in Bed." Other family moments included an encore with Glenn and Leon trading vocals and licks on Peter Green's Fleetwood Mac classic, "Oh Well!" The closing encore explained the reason a keyboard stood stage left the entire show untouched...until then: Glenn's youngest son Wesley joined his dad and older bro for Squeeze's "Goodbye Girl." Glenn opened with "Innocence," the lead song on Squeeze's latest album, The Knowledge. His set included a two of my fave Squeeze "deep" tracks, "Labeled with Love" and "Woman's World." Already have my tickets to see Squeeze next fall! Date: August 17.

5) The Eagles continues the family affair motif with Glenn Frey's son Deacon joining the band along with musician extraordinaire Vince Gill in place of the late co-founder. Amazing to think Don Henley remains the sole original member; albeit Joe Walsh and Timothy B. Schmit both logged longer time as Eagles than the players they succeeded (respectively Bernie Leadon and Randy Meisner) and are in the Rock Hall as members of this iconic band. For people like me though, I can still recall Walsh fronting The James Gang and Timothy replacing Randy in Poco and handling all of Richie Furay's lead vocals after Richie split after the release of Crazy Eyes. The band plays tight and demonstrates tight harmonies – probably the main reason Timothy did not get a change to sing some of the leads Glenn used to perform; Timothy's harmony vocals remain so integral to much of their classic songs. Venue: Madison Square Garden: October 9.

6) For our anniversary see my blog, "[She's in my heart](#)," I took Shelly to see one of her personal faves, Rod Stewart, at Mohegan Sun. One of my all-time fave bands remains the Faces (Find some clips of the band playing live on YouTube!) and I include Rod the Mod among my favorite vocalists. Rod certainly delivered that eve singing a good sample of his catalogue of hits. He covers songs by others as if he composed them (Dylan's "Forever Young," Tom Wait's "Downtown Train," Tim Hardin's "Reason to Believe," Van Morrison's "Have I Told You Lately" and Curtis Mayfield's (with The Impressions) "People Get Ready" that Rod originally performed with Jeff Beck). Only one Faces tune, but still soared: "Stay with Me." Date: March 24.

7) During my Hofstra days, I got to see various shows featuring some combination of former Byrds Roger McGuinn, Chris Hillman and the late Gene Clark together or solo but on the same bill. So not a surprise when they reformed as McGuinn, Clark and Hillman. Their Bottom Line concert memorialized by a WNEW-FM radio recording that I attended in my first year of law school remains one of my fave shows and a concert recording that I continue to enjoy to this day. So when I got word that Roger and Chris would reunite for a Byrds Sweetheart of the Rodeo 50th Anniversary tour, it was a must attend concert for this commentator. Backed by an amazing Marty Stuart and His Fabulous Superlatives, Chris and Roger focused their first set on tunes that help explain how Rodeo came to be. As I blogged, "[A Special Day Indeed](#)." Story-telling interspaced each selection. They opened with Dylan's "My Back Pages," always a signature Byrds tune. They explained the musical influences behind "Mr. Spaceman" preceded it with teasers of "I've Just Seen A Face" and "Act Naturally". The second set included Sweetheart in its entirety with one difference: opening and closing with Dylan's classic "You Aint Goin' Nowhere." The encore opened with "So You Want to be a Rock and Roll Star," included Tom Petty's "American Girl" which I originally thought was a McGuinn song because I first heard Roger perform it at the Bottom Line with his then Thunderbyrd band. They concluded the encore set with "Turn! Turn! Turn!" You can find much of the tour's performances on YouTube. Venue: Town Hall,

September 23

8) Peter Frampton opening for Steve Miller at Radio City Music Hall, June 27. There remain certain songs that when an artist opens a show just sets the tone for me. Peter did that with “Somethin’ Happenin’.” I never really got into Miller in his heyday delivering hit after hit on FM Radio. But I really appreciated how I knew all the numbers and the show sounded so nice. The highlight was mid-Miller set when Frampton came out to do three blues covers with Steve (Elmore James’ Stranger Blues, Freddie King’s Same Old Blues (Peter on vocals) and K.C. Douglas’ Mercury Blues). RCMH certainly turned into “Swingtown.” that eve.

9) After Shelly took me for my birthday last year to see Poco’s co-founder better known for his work with Kenny Loggins, I was excited at the opportunity to see Jim Messina play at what would be my first 2018 show. Jim and his band played a tight set that covered his solo career and his participation in Buffalo Springfield, Poco, Loggins and Messina. He covered Richie Furay’s Springfield tunes, “Kind Woman” and “A Child’s Claim To Fame,” his Poco classic, “You Better Think Twice.” Think of a show when in succession how see and hear (and experience) great versions of these L&M songs: “Travelin’ Blues,” “Listen to A Country Song,” “Holiday Hotel,” “Danny’s Song” and “Be Free.” Of course he closed with the Loggins and Messina classics “Changes,” “Angry Eyes” and hit “Your Mama Don’t Dance.” Find links to some of the above in my blog, aptly named, [Be Free.](#) Venue: The Iridium, January 13.

10) I experienced three compelling shows with two things in common, much of the music was Grateful Dead and Bob Weir played at each. The very best in my view was Bob Weir and Phil Lesh at Radio City (The others were Dead and Company at Citi Field and Bob Weir & The Wolf Bros at The Beacon.). So much power in so sparse a unit. Mostly just and Bob and Phil. It included a nice dose from the Workingman’s Dead-American Beauty era, opening with “Uncle John’s Band” and closing with “Box of Rain” as the final encore. You can find both nights at Radio City on YouTube. I title my blog review, [Nothing like live.](#) Date: March 2.

Honorable mentions: Felix Cavaliere and Gene Cornish’s Rascals (including Carmine Appice on drums; see my [blog](#)) and Ronnie Spector and the Ronettes, [Dave Mason Band and Richie Furay Band](#), Niall Horan and Maren Morris.