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Ringo in Starr-studded performance at Foellinger Outdoor Theatre

The concert is a sellout.

By James Grant, nsfeatures@news-sentinel.com
Thursday, June 16, 2016 6:01 AM

Tuesday night, Beatles fans can rejoice as Ringo Starr, one of the beloved Fab Four, finally graces a concert stage here in Fort Wayne at Foellinger Theatre.

Though Indianapolis played host to The Beatles in 1964 when they performed live at the Indianapolis State Fair and has been the location of several solo appearances by Paul McCartney and Ringo Starr throughout the years, this is the first time any member of the Beatles has performed live in the Summit City.

The man who drummed on some of the most revered rock classics of all time as well as the crooner on The Beatles "Act Naturally," "Yellow Submarine" and "Don't Pass Me By" will share not only his drumming skills but his natural showmanship, which shines through abundantly on stage.

Beatles fans have a lot to look forward to, but fans who go to the show will also hear some fantastic music from members of the All-Starr Band who are hit-makers in their own right.

The current All-Starr Band lineup includes Gregg Rolie from Santana ("Black Magic Woman") and Journey fame, Steve Lukather, legendary session guitarist and member of the group Toto ("Africa," "Rosanna" and "I Won't Hold You Back"), Todd Rundgren, an iconic musician himself with an amazing career, who's most famous for helping the group the Nazz and his solo hits ("Hello it's Me" and "I Saw the Light") and Richard Page from the group Mr. Mister ("Broken Wings," "Kyrie").

While The Beatles' career and music catalog are legendary, Ringo Starr's solo career has unfortunately been somewhat ignored in recent years not only by Beatles fans but pop/rock fans in general.

It may be hard to believe, but after The Beatles broke up in 1970 up until 1975, Starr had the best hit-making track record of the four ex-Beatles.

Starting in 1971 with the Top Ten hit "It Don't Come Easy" (written by Starr and George Harrison), six more Top Ten hits followed including "Back Off Boogaloo" in 1972, "Photograph" and "You're Sixteen" both No. 1 hits in 1973, "Oh My My" and "Only You" in 1974 and "No No Song" in 1975.

Starr was the only member of The Beatles to be able to harness cooperation from all of his ex-bandmates resulting in his classic best-selling album "Ringo" in 1973, which featured songwriting contributions from John Lennon, George Harrison and Paul McCartney and the nearly reunited Beatles (only Paul was missing) playing on the Lennon written classic "I'm the Greatest".

When Starr's drinking became an issue and his solo hits began to dry up in the late 1970s, the legendary ex-Beatle went through a tough period of poorly received albums, which left his recording career in near tatters.

Starr also dabbled in the world of acting from the late 1960s through the 1980s, which further distanced him from his music and may have contributed to his becoming more of a headline than a musical headliner in the 1980s.

Though managing one more Top 40 hit in 1981 with "Wrack My Brain," written by George Harrison, Starr nearly gave up on his musical career until he stopped drinking and went into rehab in 1988.



Ringo Starr poses for a portrait on Monday in New York. Starr is currently on a U.S. tour with his All-Starr Band, which finishes on July 2 in Los Angeles. He turns 76 on July 7. (From The Associated Press)

More Information Ringo and his All-Starr Band

WHAT: Ringo Starr, once a member of The Beatles, brings his All-Starr Band to Fort Wayne

WHEN: 7:30 p.m. Tuesday

WHERE: Foellinger Outdoor Theatre, 3411 Sherman Blvd.

COST: Sold out

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In 1989 Starr hit the road for the first time since The Beatles' last tour in 1966 with the first incarnation of Ringo and His All-Starr Band, which reawakened his love of performing and jump-started his musical career.

Beginning with 1992's "Time Takes Time" album through 2016's well-received "Postcards from Paradise" album, Starr has produced some stellar music, which though not as best-selling as his '70s peak is as every bit as enjoyable.

Beatles fans who may have written Starr off as a musical performer should sample some of his later work such as "Weight of the World," "King of Broken Hearts," "Vertical Man," "Choose Love" and his touching tribute to the late George Harrison, "Never Without You," to see that there's more to Starr's career than just The Beatles.

Though derided in some circles for his musical abilities, Starr's drumming is a crucial part of The Beatles sound; always serving the song while never taking center stage.

And though his singing voice isn't his strong point, Starr's natural charisma is apparent in his vocal work, and it's that certain star quality that makes his music appealing and was the very thing, along with his drumming talent, that drew his fellow Beatles to make them their drummer in 1962.

In 2015 Starr was finally inducted to the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame as a solo performer; he was inducted as a member of The Beatles in 1988, thus highlighting his achievements as a performer outside of his untouchable contribution to music as a member of The Beatles.

Starr seems content these days to record and tour and has bonded with the current All-Starr Band lineup, which he says feels more like a band to him. He has said in many interviews over the years that's where he's most comfortable and happy, playing with a great band of musicians.

"I feel like we are a band; maybe my name is in the front, but we're a band," Starr told Billboard magazine earlier this month. "We support each other, and we know each other and we have a lot of fun. We play well, the songs are great and the audiences love it, but it's also sitting on the plane, sitting in the bus, sitting in the van — it's all OK."

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