



David Kilminster – On Tour w/ Roger Waters’ The Wall Live

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The first time I heard Pink Floyd’s *The Wall* I was on a class trip to Washington DC in 1993. I was 12 years old and in the last semester of my 8th grade year, and my best friend Cristina Dibartolo lent me the album—on tape. Twenty years later, *The Wall* has just finished its epic 2010-2012 world tour, and Roger Waters’ lead guitarist Dave Kilminster is a friend, a fierce guitar player and one of the most humble, gentle souls around. Home in England after being on the road for nearly two years—performing to sold-out arenas and stadiums in Latin America, North America and Europe—I asked Dave if he could share some of his favorite memories from tour. And, like the true gent he is, he obliged.

Dave’s top 5 moments from the last 2 years

On Tour w/ Roger Waters’ The Wall Live

5/ Mexico

It’s always interesting to see how different cultures and audiences react at our concerts... Some places we’ve played can be very quiet and respectful, staying seated throughout the entire performance, and only really showing their appreciation right at the end... whilst certain other towns can be much

more rowdy and raucous, no doubt partially due to the large amounts of alcohol being consumed... and 'joints' so strong you can smell them from the stage!!!

Other nationalities become so emotionally involved in the event that they are in tears even before the show has begun... And when the show FINALLY begins, they spend the evening singing along at the top of their voices to every word... every vocal melody... every guitar lick... and miming the drums mid air with their fists...

Mexico is one such country.

And one of my favourite moments of this tour happened in Mexico last year, during the song 'Waiting For The Worms'. The song has a very slow tempo... and after a few bars, some of the audience started flicking their lighters on and off in time with the music... Very soon there were hundreds, and then thousands of people doing the same thing... the flames starting near the stage, and flashing all the way to the back of the hall (due to sound being slower than the speed of light)... Just this huge blanket of fire washing over the audience very quickly in time with the music. It looked totally incredible, and I had chills all over my body... I looked around at all the backing singers (who are supposed to be very serious at that point), and they all had the biggest smiles on their faces...

4/ The letter

I receive a lot of really wonderful emails... most of them from people saying how much they love the show, and my contribution to it... the usual comment is 'I've been going to concerts for 20/30/40 (delete where applicable) years, and this is without doubt the greatest show I've ever seen'... and of course I never get tired of hearing it... it's such an incredible accolade, and I feel very proud and privileged to be a small part of such an amazing event.

But a particular email I received two years ago really took my breathe away... this guy had written to thank me for our amazing concert, saying it was the best concert of his life... But he also told me that he'd taken his daughter that night too... and they had such a wonderful time together... and he was so very happy, because he said "when I'm dead and gone, I know that my daughter will always have this perfect memory of us together at your show"...

Stuff like that just doesn't fit into my tiny head... but it makes me feel very humble...

3/ Drew Barrymore

After one of our concerts at the Staples center in Los Angeles (in 2010), we went to a private room in a restaurant for a late snack... and I sat at one of the last seats available, which happened to be on a table away from the rest of the band.

The girl next to me (whom I'd met very briefly backstage earlier) introduced me to her friend 'Drew' sitting opposite... I looked up... "Hi Drew" I said, smiled, and then looked back at the menu...

I guess I was a bit slow that night, because it took a minute or two before I realised that it was actually Drew Barrymore sitting opposite!!! And just as I twigged, she also realised that I was the guitarist on top of the wall that evening!!!

She looked at me, and pointed to the sky... and it took all of my will power NOT to also point to the sky and say "E.T. phone home"!!!! Hahaha... but I managed to resist the temptation... I simply nodded, and with that she grasped my hand tightly between her hands and held them up to her forehead... her eyes closed... and remained like that for about thirty seconds...

We talked for a while, and I was amazed at how interesting (and interested) she was... without doubt one of the nicest people I've ever met... Before she left we stood and hugged for a long time... it almost felt like a spiritual connection... a real meeting of souls... and totally unforgettable.

2/ Chile, watching the outdoor Wall show for the very first time...

For the first few legs of the tour, 'The Wall' had been restricted to indoor arenas... until a new design breakthrough involving a very impressive (and rather expensive!!) roof meant that we could now play outdoor stadiums too!!!

So, the day before our very first outdoor show (in Chile) Roger asked if we'd like to go down to the stadium and watch the new, bigger show... complete with the longer wall, and added video footage of the band (shot in Athens last year) added to the farthest ends... So we all popped down to

the venue, and sat in this empty stadium... holding some rather potent cocktails that the catering crew had knocked up... and received a private showing of this amazing concert, complete with a rough mix of a live recording of us from last year... as seen by Joe public...

And as we all sat and watched, I understood why sometimes the audience can be a little quiet... it's not like any rock 'n' roll show I've ever seen before, and I just sat there open mouthed... astonished... shaking my head in total disbelief, and uttering the occasional expletive...

Also, because what I was seeing and hearing was so radically different from my actual experience on stage, I found that I could listen to it totally dispassionately... as if it wasn't me playing at all... which was a strange mixture of emotions...

Anyone that knows me, knows that I'm definitely my own worse critic... a total perfectionist, who is never ever happy with my own performance... but I listened to the guitar sounds on this rough mix... especially the solo in 'Comfortably Numb' and thought, "wow, that's one of the best live guitar sounds I've ever heard!!!"... It just totally blew me away....

And at the same time realising "hey, that's actually me"!!!!

So this evening, aided by a little too much alcohol, introduced me to a whole new experience of being almost happy with my guitar playing!!! It was really nice... if only just for one night... :O)

1/ Our last show in Quebec, 21st July 2010

Our tour was scheduled to finish on the 14th July in Philadelphia... but when the chance of playing 'The Wall' to our biggest audience ever came up (not to mention having our biggest Wall ever... just over 800 feet!!!), Roger decided it would be a great way to finish the tour... with a bang!!!

It felt (to me anyway) like this final show was the culmination of all our hard work over the last two years... and a bad performance from me now would definitely tarnish the whole of the last two years (see, I told you I'm very hard on myself!!)... Not helped by the fact that, as it was a late addition, we actually had a week off in beautiful Quebec before playing... which was absolutely wonderful (I love Quebec), but having a week off from playing before our largest Wall gig EVER was just a little daunting!!!

I shouldn't have worried... the show was totally amazing... as were the audience... a lot of whom were wearing these flashing broaches on their lapels, which added a surreal atmosphere to the evening... especially during the 'Comfortably Numb' solo (which for me is always the most stressful part of the evening)... I looked out at the crowd from my rather unique vantage point... and a sea of flashing red lights stretched out as far as the eye could see... it was totally magical...

The solo itself went really well, and after I got back down from the lift I started dancing around the stage behind the Wall (whilst everyone else was out on the front stage)... It was just SUCH an unbelievable relief... It actually felt like the first time I'd totally relaxed since the tour started in 2010... and from then on I was an emotional wreck!!

In fact during our final number (Outside The Wall) I had tears in my eyes... it felt like the perfect end though, to what has been an incredible, breathtaking two years...
