

Desire brings popular sounds of U2 to Concerts in the Park series

Aurora's Concerts in the Park series will continue next Wednesday with a homecoming of sorts.

Desire: A Tribute to U2 is no stranger to Aurora, but when they hit the band shell at Town Park on August 17, they will bring with them a unique style of showmanship that has only been honed during the global pandemic.

Since 2020, the popular tribute band had to find new ways to connect with audiences and, through the process, honed their craft.

"Nothing is like a live event to see people singing along to songs and get back to normalcy," says band member Gord Sabota. "Playing live is like second-nature to us and once [these opportunities] came back again we realized how much we love it and how much we missed it. It was incredible.

"While we were in lockdown, we invented an incredible multimedia show that we've never brought to Aurora. We bring at least six to eight TVs on stage, kind of how U2 did it in the 90s, so we're going to open up a multimedia show and let the audience kind of see U2 in real time."

U2 is a band that has entertained music lovers since its foundation in Ireland in 1976.

It's a band that has remarkable longevity ? as does Desire.

Desire has, at its core, been together for decades, even before paying tribute to the music of Bono and The Edge was even considered.

"We were playing in a high school band from the time we were 14-years-old to 18 with all the same lineup," says Sabota, adding they were all childhood friends who grew up all on the same block. "Then we had variations of the band and different cover bands [but] we went back and started this tribute band with the original four members and it makes it extra-special. We feed off each other and we know how to bring an energy to a show. The crowd connects to that energy."

And the feeling is mutual for the band.

"It's the energy and the songs that connect with a crowd," he continues. "I have been in the same position where I have seen a band I wasn't really looking forward to seeing and they just blew my mind. It doesn't matter in the end who you are paying tribute to, as long as people are enjoying themselves that's what's most important."

"We're not there to show off, we're there to enjoy a night of music with an audience and that's the reason we play, really," adds band member Dave Dellavalle. "We're lucky enough to have these incredible songs already written for us and we get the pleasure of sharing it with an audience who grew up with them and that never gets old. Even though we play the same hits, it never gets old because it is different every time. They are incredibly written songs, which are a blessing to play, and it relates to the audience.

"Since we're so involved with the band, it is kind of nice that things still progress with them. Every two and a half years, they offer up a new album, and it is like starting fresh again. You have something new for the audience and it is like starting fresh again. Probably most tribute bands are [saluting] bands that have disbanded or [musicians who] have passed away. It's kind of unusual that these guys are still going. I don't think it gets old for any of us!?"

Concerts in the Park take place at Town Park each Wednesday from 7 ? 9 p.m. through August 31. Admission is free but donations to the Aurora Food Pantry are encouraged.

Upcoming performances include The Mudmen on August 24 before the series closes August 31 with Epic Elton: A Tribute to Elton

John.

For more information, visit aurora.ca/summerconcerts.

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