

= Madonna : Tears of a Clown =

Madonna : Tears of a Clown was a one @-@ off concert by American singer Madonna , held at the Forum Theatre in Melbourne , Australia on March 10 , 2016 . The singer had not included Australia during her previous five concert tours , until the Rebel Heart Tour ( 2015 ? 16 ) , so she created the show for her Australian fans since they had waited so long for her to perform . Madonna explained that the idea behind the show was to combine music and storytelling and was influenced by clowns . Tickets were made available to Madonna 's official fan club , Icon members and were non @-@ transferable , with the person 's name printed on them .

The show started four hours late , with the delay being caused by Madonna rehearsing . Tears of a Clown consisted of Madonna singing acoustic versions of her songs while dressed as a clown . The set list comprised previously unperformed tracks and her popular songs . It was interspersed with the singer telling jokes and anecdotes . The show received positive reviews from critics who appreciated the stripped down , confessional nature of the singer 's performance and the choice of the songs and the comedy . Madonna refuted reports of her being drunk on stage , calling them false and ageist .

= = Background = =

Madonna had last toured in Australia in 1993 with The Girlie Show World Tour , her fourth concert tour . The country was skipped for the next five tours until the singer released her thirteenth studio album , Rebel Heart ( 2015 ) . To promote the album , Madonna announced the Rebel Heart Tour , and confirmed that she would be coming to Australia with the concert , as well as visit New Zealand for the first time . Before arriving in Australia , Madonna announced an extra show on March 10 , 2016 , at Melbourne 's Forum Theatre . The show was billed as an intimate gig , and was described by the singer as a fusion of music , art and comedy . It was titled as Madonna : Tears of a Clown show and was created for the singer 's Australian fans , who had waited for her to perform there for the last 23 years . During her promotional appearance at The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon in April 2015 , Madonna confessed that she is a " kind of closet comedian " and did a skit on the show ; she added , " I always do extravaganzas , they always cost a billion dollars to make ... nobody makes any money ... and sometimes I dream about simplicity . " During the show , the singer explained her decision to do Tears of a Clown :

I 've had this idea in my head for this show Tears of a Clown which is a combination of music and storytelling . Because at the end of the day I do think of myself as a story teller . But it 's rough as f--- , so bear with me and give me all the support you can . It 's from the heart . I chose to debut this work in progress , this rough rehearsal , here in Australia because I feel so bad about cancelling on you guys the last time . I 'm sorry . You 've been so patient , you waited for so long , I feel like I owe you a present , so this is your present ... I want to make a disclaimer ... If anyone thinks they came here to see a finished final show , there 's the door . This is some brand spanking new shit . I don 't know if you like it raw .

Tickets were made available to Madonna 's official fan club , Icon members , and winners with details announced at Madonna.com and through concert promoter Telstra 's promotional webpage . According to newspaper reports , the tickets were non @-@ transferable , and had the person 's name printed on them . However , all of them were in the general admission category at Forum Theatre , which holds a maximum capacity of 1 @, @ 500 . With the production design and addition of catwalk , the space allocated became smaller than that . Prior to the show The Sydney Morning Herald reported that fans started queuing up in front of the venue , while Madonna rehearsed inside , as well as at Hisense Arena . Images and songs rehearsed were leaked to fan website Drownedmadonna.com , along with Madonna 's manager Guy Oseary uploading pictures on Instagram . Madonna made several references to clowns on her own Instagram account , including uploading a short video of her riding a small tricycle . The show was confirmed to be recorded and released along with the DVD for the Rebel Heart Tour .

= = Synopsis = =

On the day of the show , the doors at Forum Theatre were supposed to open at 8 : 30pm , but since Madonna rehearsed well into the night , the show started later at midnight . The show started with Madonna appearing onstage , in a clown 's costume consisting of a billowing dress , pink and yellow stalkings , riding a tricycle and circled round it . She finally reached the front of the stage and fell down from the cycle . After conversing with the audience and throwing candy at them . Madonna started singing Stephen Sondheim 's " Send in the Clowns " , written originally for the 1973 musical , A Little Night Music , with images of Charlie Chaplin films displayed on the backdrop . She continued with " Drowned World / Substitute for Love " while standing in the center . Three songs followed with Madonna joining the band and sitting down with her guitar , including " X @-@ Static Process " , a cover of Elliott Smith 's " Between the Bars " , " Nobody 's Perfect " and " Easy Ride " . All the songs had displays showing circus themed videos ; following this Madonna started singing the song " Intervention " , while displaying an image of her son Rocco ; the singer referred to her custody battle with ex @-@ husband Guy Ritchie about Rocco .

Other acoustic versions of songs followed , including " I 'm So Stupid " , " Paradise ( Not for Me ) " , " Joan of Arc " and " Don 't Tell Me " . Before performing the next song , " Mer Girl " , Madonna explained that once she was at her father 's house and she visited the place where her mother was buried ; the place , overgrown with weed , became an inspiration behind the song . Then Madonna sang an acoustic version of " Borderline " followed by " Take a Bow " . The last song was an acoustic version of " Holiday " and it was performed as the encore of the show with Madonna playing the ukulele accompanied by her band and her dancers dressed as clowns .

= = Critical response = =

Cameron Adams from News.com.au wrote : " [ Madonna ] poured much of her sadness into her intimate two @-@ hour Tears of a Clown show , peppering emotional renditions of her hits with cheeky jokes and banter . " In another article reviewing the show , Adams noted that Tears of a Clown was " the sort of thing you never thought you 'd see a superstar do " . He complimented Madonna 's jokes , chatting about her life in @-@ between songs , for being " raw and vulnerable " and confessed that it was " fascinating ? and difficult ? to watch . We 're not used to Madonna on stage doing anything less than a fully rehearsed , slick stage show . " Concluding the review , Adams believed that Tears of a Clown professed Madonna 's touring direction into the future . Writing for The Independent Nick Levine noticed that the singer " tested out her stand @-@ up comedy skills with a series of risqué jokes and took the opportunity to defend her controversial fashion sense . " Debbie Cuthbertson from The Sydney Morning Herald gave a positive review of the show , saying " For the queen of self @-@ control , it was an open , at times even vulnerable insight into her persona . She seemed relaxed , drinking Cosmopolitans as she spoke at length between songs . " Cuthbertson also commended the choice of Forum Theatre as a venue believing it to be " inspired , and her crew lit up the grand old dame in a way that showcased all her delicate charms in a way I can 't recall any other act having ever done . "

Lachlan Kanoniuk , music critic for The Guardian , noted the " bawdy " jokes and anecdotes shared onstage by Madonna . He went on to describe the show as " a weird mix of old vaudevillian @-@ style , M15 + , smut humour and bad wordplay ; some jokes about clowns , sex jokes that were really quite bad but she had such great comedic delivery " . Kanoniuk also compared the show to Prince 's Piano & a Microphone tour , and complimented her singing during " Between the Bars " , describing it as " no costume changes , no highly synchronised dance moves , just Madonna playing an acoustic guitar and baring her soul on stage . " Francis Gibb from The Times found Madonna 's performance during " Intervention " as an intimate and " naked " moment for the singer due to the legal battle . Jon Lisi from PopMatters observed that unlike the Rebel Heart Tour , Madonna had " something to say " with Tears of a Clown show . However he was confused whether Madonna was being vulnerable as a clown or it was a case of the singer " trolling us " . Citing the instance of singing " Intervention " for Rocco , Lisi explained that " Of course she loves her son , but maybe this

was less about her pain and more about the press ? exploitation of her pain . As the show got more intimate with each song and personal anecdote , a disturbing thought crept into my mind : what if it was meant to be a joke ? " Lisi concluded that the show had the ability " represent a transitional point in [ Madonna 's ] career " , although the purpose was still unclear .

After the show ended , several media outlets reported that Madonna may have been drunk during the performance ; however , Madonna blasted these reports , by responding : " Thanks for supporting me . Too bad people don 't know the art of acting and playing a character . I could never do any of my shows high or drunk . And yes underlying all of this is sexism and mysongony [ sic ] which proves that not only do we not get equal pay but we are still treated like heretics if we step out of line and think outside the box ! Sexism is alive and kicking but i am # livingforlove . "

= = Set list = =

Source :