



Roger Waters turned the Pepsi Center into a kaleidoscope of sound as the Pink Floyd leader and his band performed "The Wall" on Tuesday night. *John Leyba, The Denver Post*

"The Wall" still astonishing

By Candace Horgan
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At one point, during the intermission of Tuesday night's brilliant, blistering performance of "The Wall" by Roger Waters, it was hard not to weep for humanity.

While Waters transformed the stage wall into a memorial, projecting pictures onto the wall of the dead from the wars of the last century with little stories of how they died, people filed up and down the stairs obliviously, intent on their beers and day-to-day minutiae.

It seemed as though many in attendance were missing the point.

Of course, the genius of "The Wall" is that it is very open to interpretation. Waters' part-stage musical, part-rock opera, part-guitar odyssey covers a lot of ground and many themes, including war, sex, death and isolation, all acted out at various times with the music proving a seamless integration of art and sound. It's not hyperbole to say "The Wall" may be the greatest rock album ever.

Waters played the entire album, in track order, the only way it should be heard. What was astonishing in the presentation was the way he turned the Pepsi Center into a three-dimensional kaleidoscope of sound.

When the prerecorded sound of a helicopter echoed through the arena at the end of "The Thin Ice," you could track its progress from the back of the arena to the front.

The wall itself, constructed to totally hide the performers during the first half of the set, was used as a projection screen throughout. During the haunting "Mother," Waters had a video of himself performing the song at Earls Court in 1980, and he sang in stereo with himself. On "Goodbye Blue Sky," planes dropped bombs shaped like the Shell oil logo, dollar signs, crosses, the Star of David and the Communist hammer and sickle.

The sound of the entire album is one of overwhelming despair and doom, so that when Waters projected "Trust Us" on the wall, it became brilliant irony.

One of Waters' inspirations for the album was the disconnect he felt from the audiences at Pink Floyd shows in the 1970s.

In original performances, the band performed most of the second set behind the wall, showing up only occasionally. The wall symbolized how the rock star felt removed from his fans. It was weird, then, to see Waters sing "Comfortably Numb" in front of the wall, raising his arms in triumph to the crowd. It seemed to turn the album around on itself.

Whether Waters has made peace with his past and his stardom matters little to the power of the music in the long run, however. At the end, the wall was torn down into a mass of chaos, providing the perfect dénouement to the evening while the band played "Outside the Wall" outside the mass of bricks.

Photo gallery. See more images from the concert.

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