

Billy J. Condor: Live From Agora Hills

Written by Billy J. Condor

I have to play that song again.



After twenty years, it's still hard to make the transition from Arena to small venue. We used to think of the small venues as the Fillmore and the Troubador. The Fillmore always smelt better. Both were good intimate shows. Tonight I am playing Agoura Hills in a 500 seater off the 101 next to a Del Taco. They have mooseheads on the wall. This is too intimate.

It's always nice when you have an arena date next month. I don't have an arena date next month.

And we have come to the part of the show when it's time to play "that" song again.

A 52 minute set squeezed between two other "retro" bands. How did we get 20 years older? "That Song" was a simplistic melody that everyone got married to in 1986. The song is about this woman "I pledged my soul" to (in 1984). After I hit the charts, the woman I wrote this song about got passed around between every spandex thigh of the Sunset Strip between 1987 and 1992. I hear she is still in the scene. Whatever the scene is.. now... I have no idea what she is up too. I have no idea what the scene is up too.

I heard she was caught giving Rodney on the Rock a hummer in the basement bar what used to be called the Coconut Teazer.

“That” song. “That” song that so many people got married to and 50% of them are divorced now. Does Luther Vandross ever feel guilt about the divorced people who played his song at their wedding? Guns and Roses play the divorce.

And my penance for fame, is losing this girl I once loved so much and having to replay her song 4-5 times a week as people cheer, pull out their lighters and sing back at me. Morseo when I do Vegas.

Blue Oyster Cult is waiting in the wings... I wonder if they feel the same way about “Don’t Fear the Reaper” They look old, sweaty and swagerless. Rock on! I wonder if they have any “old school” blow. That chick from Berlin still looks really good. I was wondering if she had gone that way of the chick from Peter Paul and Mary, and if she had would she still sing “I’m A Sex?”

If the fans don’t hear this song, they boo me. I got nominated for THREE Grammy’s for this.

New artist of the Year 1986, Best Song and Best Album... fucking “We Are The World” swept. Fuck them, they don’t know how much I have to struggle through it every night. I felt so connected and nearly spiritual when I wrote it. Does anyone get engaged to “We are the World?”

That song is a painful anthem.

I was 26 when I wrote it. I was thirty when the record came out; Lived over by the Tar Pits... which they have cleaned up quite nicely. I can’t believe our old studio goes for \$1100 a month now. Would like some resids off that.

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I was 26. I'm 52.

And now I slave through it, still trying to forget the woman I wrote this song about. It would have been different if it was a B-side or an eclectic track. I could play it when I want to. But this was THE BIG HIT and I have to play it every time I get paid. It's in the waiver, right next to the pastramis.

After all this time, I am not desensitized to it. I feel her hair slappin me at 4:27 when I have to be at my temp job at 6:59. I do a shot right before I play it.. a longstanding tradition.

Julie. Julie. Julie.

Julie, the woman that was the source of all of my much success. I try to remember the early emotion or the performance is hollow. THAT song was the first slow dance I ever had.

First verse... I'm starving and I really hope the pastramis in my waiver made it over.

Chorus... everyone sing along.

Second verse... shit, someone just proposed. This happens a lot. DUDE!!! DON'T YOU KNOW HOW THE SONG ENDS!! This happens half the time. IT always happens after the "pledge my soul" line.

I wait for it.

Goddamnit, I am just three verses away from dinner. Peter Cetera is town... a much better choice to propose to. I guess I was cheaper.

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Stop the chorus to put the spotlight on the newly engaged couple.

She's fat. He's fat. I hustle their fat asses on to the stage. Kiss the girl with sweaty lips and the burgundy stain. Her tounge gets ambitious.

Maybe I'll get some later. She's has to have a friend, right?

It extends the show an extra four and a half minutes and I'm hungry.

I was so happy when I wrote "that" song.

What happened?

What happened to her?