

ROCKON

MAGAZINE

GREAT
THE RENO
BALLOON
RACE
2025
SEPTEMBER 5-7

OFFBEAT
ARTS & MUSIC FESTIVAL

ROBIN TROWER

ISSUE 83

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ROBIN TROWER



Gina Adams
CEO/Publisher



RKW Designs
Design Director



Bill Kopp
Contributing
Journalist



Jason Kincade
Contributing
Photographer



Tony Contini
Contributing
Journalist/
Photographer

GINA ADAMS - CEO/PUBLISHER | 949.337.0246 | GINA@ROCKONMAGAZINE.COM

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American Century *Championship*

Inside the Ropes at the American Century Golf Tournament

By Gina Adams – Rock On Magazine

Lake Tahoe's Edgewood Tahoe Golf Course once again transformed into the ultimate playground for the rich, the famous, and the fearless this July.

Under bright Sierra skies, a star-studded field descended on the 36th Annual American Century Championship, where fairways became a stage for celebrity swagger, hilarious mishaps, and championship-caliber competition.

This year's lineup read like a who's who of sports royalty and entertainment icons. Basketball legends Stephen Curry, Charles Barkley, Ray Allen, and Vince Carter added their signature flair to the fairways. Football heavyweights like Travis and Jason Kelce, Josh Allen, and Aaron Rodgers, along with Hall of Famers Jerry Rice and Emmitt Smith, brought charisma and crowd appeal. On the baseball side, stars such as John Smoltz and Albert Pujols teed it up, while NHL legend Joe Pavelski and tennis ace Mardy Fish boosted the competitive edge. Of course, no celebrity golf weekend is complete without unforgettable moments. Travis Kelce made headlines after a stray shot hit a fan—promptly diffused with his signature smile, autograph, and a selfie op. Meanwhile, Jimmy Rollins stunned the crowd with a hole-in-one on the 12th, winning a luxury boat and celebrating in trademark style—by cannonballing into the lake.

But the heart of the weekend belonged to Joe Pavelski. After years of near misses—finishing third in 2023 and runner-up in 2024—Pavelski finally claimed his first American Century Championship title. He led wire-to-wire in the modified Stableford format, scoring 73 points—29 of which came in Sunday's clutch final round—clinching the win by a commanding nine-point margin over John Smoltz. An eagle on the par-5 18th sealed the deal and sent the crowd into a frenzy. Pavelski, celebrating his 41st birthday that weekend and his 17th wedding anniversary the day before, earned the \$150,000 winner's share from the \$750,000 purse. He capped off his victory with a joyful plunge into Lake Tahoe.

For fans, the 2025 ACC was a perfect storm of competition, comedy, and camaraderie—a reminder that while the swings may not always be PGA-perfect, the stories, the star power, and the Sierra setting make this event one of the most anticipated summer traditions in celebrity sports. From behind the ropes, it wasn't just about the golf—it was about the magic that happens when you mix Hollywood lights with Tahoe sunshine.

Special thanks to Jennifer and Phil of Weidinger PR for the kind invitation to this unforgettable weekend.





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TAHOE WINE + FEAST

By Bill Kopp

Fun is the foundation of the inaugural Tahoe Wine + Feast event, a four-day extravaganza happening September 18-21. The event will showcase some of the best wines from America's West Coast and beyond, inventive and delectable food prepared by the region's best chefs, and a curated experience at Tahoe Blue Event Center featuring sommeliers, educators, brand experts and more. Organizer Tom Kees took a quick pause from preparing for the gala to speak with Rock On about the origins, components and future of Tahoe Wine + Feast.

What inspired you to launch Tahoe Wine + Feast?

Well, let me go back in time. I did a radio show for 16 years, interviewing winemakers and vintners. I got to know a lot of them, and got to know the business very well. I even owned a wine bar at one point in time. And I've done a lot of wine dinners. So I have those one-night stands – pardon the expression – in my background. And when my [out-of-town] friends come out to visit us here in Tahoe, we always take them over to Napa. So like the saying goes, I know a thing or two because I've done a thing or two.

One of my friends – who used to be my co-host on the radio show – said to me, “T.K., Lake Tahoe is gorgeous! Why don't you do one of those Pebble Beach Food and Wine kind of things up here?” I said, “You know, my wife and I have already been talking about it!” So here we are a year and a half later, and we're going to launch a big four-day event here in Lake Tahoe.



What are your objectives for the event?

First of all, it's always that three-letter F-word: fun. I want people to have fun. I enjoy wine. It brings people together; always has, always will. And I think it should be fun. While I love my sommeliers – trust me – I'm not here to be a proscriber of wine to people. We're going to have about a hundred wineries pouring four wines each.

There are only about eight of these big events around the country. I've studied them all, and the big one – the granddaddy of them all – is in Aspen. It's every June, and I think they're on their 42nd year. And all of those events around the country are outdoors, pitched in tents.

But here in Lake Tahoe, we have the Tahoe Blue Event Center. Doing it there makes sense for a lot of reasons: I don't have to build a tent, rent chairs, tables, stages and all that. I've done that before; I used to run professional golf tournaments.

I just want people to come and enjoy really good, phenomenal wine and food without it being fussy. I want it to be fun. That's our goal.

Do you plan to make Tahoe Wine + Feast an annual event?

Oh, yes; it's going to be annual. I've got a three-year deal with the Tahoe Blue Event Center, with options for the future. This is our first year, and it's been a real learning curve putting it together brick by brick. Because what I've come to understand very clearly is that – even among my friends who love wine – not a lot of people have been to big four-day events. They're much different than a one- or two-day event.

When I just mentioned that there are 400 wines to taste, we'll have four hours on Saturday and four hours on Sunday at the grand tastings. And if you divide the 400 wines by the eight hours, see how many wines you can get to! You've got to have a plan to do these things. I tried it at Pebble Beach one year; it's impossible. Because if you talk more than 30 seconds with anybody, you'll never make it around to all the wines. So you've got to prioritize what you want to taste and how you're going to get there.

One of the phrases that's used a lot in the wine business is, "What was your aha moment of getting involved in premium wine?" I want people to walk away saying, "Wow." That's what I want!; I want to give them their aha moment.

We have three feasts during this four-day event: Thursday, Friday and Saturday night. They're all special dinners with special chefs and special wineries.

The Thursday and Friday dinners are going to be at the Tahoe Blue Event Center. It's a really good spot to host a dinner; it's a little different than going to a restaurant.

The culmination is on Saturday night. We're doing it at the Idle Hour wine bar on the lake, which is gorgeous. A good friend of mine – a multiple James Beard award-winning chef from Fort Worth – is coming to do a game dinner. My favorite winery in the world is Chappellet from Napa. And we're pairing those two together on Saturday night.

What are you projecting as far as attendance?

It's our first year, so this is a real swag. But we think for the four days it'll be between 700 and 1,000 people, with the bulk of that being on Saturday and Sunday.



What are some of the highlights of the overall program?

My original thought was, "We'll just do a golf tournament over here at Edgewood." But I got to thinking about that, and realized, "What's that going to draw: 100 people?" So I decided, "No, I don't need a golf tournament."

The first event is going to be what we call WOW: Women of Wine. We're honoring about 40-odd women, whether they're a winemaker, a vintner, ordering person on the phone, or anybody who has exceeded and really understands and gets what customer service is. That will be the opening event at a brunch on Thursday. So that's one of the highlights.

Following that, we're throwing a big party at the arena. We'll have spirits people, brewery people, wineries there. And it's for all the VIPs, chefs and winery people to consume the good stuff that'll be following the brunch. And that night is the first feast: a barbecue with lots of ribs and that kind of stuff. That's the first day.

The second day on Friday is expansive; there are eight seminars lined up. One will feature a knowledgeable person talking about the difference between Champagne, Prosecco and cava. We've got wineries coming from all over, including France and Italy and Spain, and there are three seminars that deal with those areas. And there's so much... [laughs] there's another one I'm forgetting about at the moment.

We also have a very recognized master sommelier from Puerto Rico who – of all things – is now involved in tequila. He's got a new product that's coming out about the same time this event happens. He's going to lead a seminar on tequila so people can understand all the differences. And of course this guy knows wine backwards and forwards, too; he's a master somm, and he's a great guy. So that'll be a fun day for people who want to do more of a deep dive.

The serious wine or spirits people will be there on Friday, and then Saturday and Sunday will feature the grand tastings where the whole arena is filled with tables featuring 100 wineries and 30-plus chefs. Every fourth table or so, they'll be handing out small bites of food. And the bottom level of the arena will have vendors who can sell you jewelry and paintings.





With all the chefs and wine experts that you're going to have, it'll be very much of an interactive experience...

People today like to use the word immersion. The VIPs will have the whole upper level at the center where they can be by themselves and enjoy special wine and special food. Each day over the weekend, Saturday and Sunday, they'll have a chef assigned just for them to produce wonderful food. And then sommeliers will be wandering around with some wine that most of the people won't see, because it'll be for the VIPs.

Sometimes people make this wine stuff too serious; I feel like I'm listening to a chemistry professor. I know how to do this stuff very well, but you know, people don't need to hear that. There are a lot of people who are not oenophiles; they haven't studied how to make wine. They just want to taste something that they enjoy and say, "Hey, tell me a little bit about it." I don't want people walking out brain dead. Maybe a little looped, but don't tell the police that!

The good news is that with the four casino hotels right there, it's a walking event.

What are you most looking forward to about the event?

Smiling faces. That's it. I want people to look around and say, "Man, what a party!" To have this much wine available to taste, and then have food every 15 steps, it's like, "Wow, I'm king for a day!"

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UP, UP AND AWAY WITH THE GREAT RENO BALLOON RACE

by Bill Kopp

Launched in 1982, the Great Reno Balloon Race is a free, annual event that brings together some of the nation's best balloon pilots, nearly 100 dazzlingly-colored balloons and tens of thousands of spectators for a three fun-filled days at Reno's Rancho San Rafael Park. Billed as the world's largest free hot-air ballooning event, this year's race happens September 5-7. The organizing team's Pete Copeland spoke with Rock On about the event's history, and gave a preview of what attendees can expect this year.

Rock On: How did the Great Reno Balloon Race get started?

Pete Copeland: In the late 1970s and early '80s, the National Championship Air Races were held here in northern Nevada; September is quite beautiful here. [The organizers] wanted to have more entertainment for the fans while they were getting the aircraft ready. So they would set up balloons up before the air race started; they'd put 15, 20 balloons up. And they found that it was popular; they had these big crowds out there in the early morning. It was wonderful! So they thought, "Hey, what if we took that part of the show and did it the weekend before the air races? Maybe we could help drive tourism and have it in this really cool park we have in downtown Reno. Let's see what happens."

They did it for one year, and it became incredibly popular. They did it for free, which was smart. And it's still free to attend; our whole mandate is to keep it free for the community, for everybody. And we're a nonprofit organization. After that start, the race just took on a life of its own.

What logistics are involved in organizing and executing an event like this?

We are in a massive, beautiful 200-plus acre park that's right downtown. To get ready for this event, it requires a lot. You've got to have electrical, medical, infrastructures for sewage and more. You've got to basically build out a "city" that can accommodate 50,000 fans a day for three days.

How far in advance do you start planning for each year's event?

Well, I always use an analogy out of the movie *Elf*. They are celebrating that they had a successful Christmas that night, and then they get started the next day. We get started the next day. Actually, we're already talking now about our 45th anniversary, which is next year.

What makes Rancho San Rafael Park an ideal place to stage the race?

The geography of the park has a natural bowl setting. The location is physically right next to our wonderful 150-year old University of Nevada, Reno and downtown. The park is well suited to accommodate the 50,000 fans and 90 to 100 aircraft... not to mention a thousand to 2,000 volunteers. It's a perfect setting for what we do.

There are several events on the program. What's the Super Glow Show?

By 4:30 in the morning, there's going to be about 40,000 people out there. The Super Glow show is the first program of the morning. This is at about 5 a.m.; it kind of warms up the crowd. We'll have about 40 balloons on the ground, on a field of about 75 acres. And they're choreographed to music. Each aircraft will light up to music. And it ends with "Dueling Banjos," with the east side versus the west side. One's the guitar, and one's the banjo. It's really epic; it's a spectacular show. We started the Super Glow Show in its current form about 10 to 12 years ago, and it's super popular.



What is the Dawn Patrol?

Dawn Patrol is the most popular feature of our entire event. Right after Super Glow, at 5:30 or 5:40 our eight Dawn Patrol pilots go up. They actually fly in the dark! One pilot's going to be in the middle, and the rest of the balloons will surround them. And then they'll spin. It's just amazing what they can do with these rudderless aircraft. Those eight pilots are the elite of the elite; there are probably only 50 pilots in the world who have the accreditation to fly at night. Our Dawn Patrol show goes on for about 45 minutes.

What's Mass Ascension?

Well, Dawn Patrol starts in the dark and ends in the light; it's really extraordinary. Mass Ascension happens next. Upwards of 100 balloons – the rest of the balloons that are not flying in Dawn Patrol – all inflate. It's really impressive to see 100 balloons in this intimate setting with 50,000 of your friends there. The morning's breaking, the light is up; in the morning sun it's truly spectacular.

We're talking about aircraft that are – to some extent – at the mercy of wind. Does everything always go as planned?

It just seems to, every single year. The race is an invitation-only event. So we have the best pilots, people who have been doing this for some time. We have a good mixture of veteran pilots and new balloons; that keeps it fresh.

How does the race work?

The competition is twofold; it's kind of old-school meets new-school. The pilots are given beanbags. There's a target on the other side of the park; they fly their aircraft over that target, drop their bean bags and get points. And on the other days, they [locate] a virtual target, an avatar. They get a proximity on an app that indicates, say, a thousand feet at that spot. And when they go through the precise area, that scores points for them. We add all those points together, and the winner will get upwards of \$2,500. It's really a great competition; it challenges the skill sets of the pilots, and it's a lot of fun for the sponsors and the fans.

People come from far and wide to the race each year, don't they?

Oh, yeah! We'll see about 50,000 each day, for a total of about 135,000 to 150,000 over the three days. This is a locally born event, but tourism is a big part of what we do. 40% of everything that we do will be tourism related. We get accolades from all over the world. The fact that we're as big as we are and still free, that's unheard of. And the flying conditions can be amazing here. It's considered one of the top venues for pilots; we have a waiting list every year, and we bring the best and safest pilots. We have a lot of good things at that are in our favor.



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ARTS & MUSIC FESTIVAL

Reno's OffBeat Music Festival: Small-scale and Curated by Design by Bill Kopp

Reno's OffBeat Music Festival celebrates its 10th year this October. With a wide array of artists gracing multiple stages in a concentrated, walkable area, the festival presents local, regional and national artists ranging from brand-new to up-and-coming to right-on-the-edge-of-breaking-big. Staged in the lively Brewery District, OffBeat presents something for most every musical taste. The festival's impressive lineup is spread across three days, October 2-4. Co-founder and organizer Flip Wright took a quick break from planning this year's festival to speak with Rock On about the festival's beginnings, its development, and exciting plans for the future.



The OffBeat Festival has been a yearly event since 2015. How did it get started?

It was a confluence of people meeting each other. We were at a Flaming Lips concert; one of us had a suite at a hotel nearby. After the show a bunch of people ended up at the suite, and just started to talk. I met a guy who was a local promoter at the time. He had some experience in music promotion, and I'm an ad guy. I own an agency and have a marketing background and a general love of music and music discovery.

We both said, "What Reno needs is a festival a la South by Southwest, one that's venue-based, where people can roam around to different bars." Reno is not really set up for the traditional "festival in a big field" kind of a thing, and none of us were particularly interested in talking about that anyway.

Our third partner at the time was a local musician, and he brought the musician side [to the concept]. He also ran a nonprofit here in town, so he [knew something about] raising money. So the three of us came together as the initial team. Today I am the sole remaining of the original three. By [virtue] of risk tolerance, I'm the one who has stuck with it, and here we are.

Speaking of risk, what's the biggest peril in mounting a festival like this?

I always like to joke: "Ask anyone who's in sales to try to create a festival where you book bands that no one's heard of, and try to sell tickets for that." That is very difficult.

But you're making it work...

Yes. And I think it's a combination of things. When we started the festival, we made sure that we had some local bands on the roster, bands that we knew that people would want to come out and see. We had to find artists that we knew would be a hit. And we tried to build each successive year, taking the best of what we have locally.



Every now and then you get lucky. There will be a band that you've heard of and that you love, but that isn't necessarily mainstream. But they're big enough that they can draw some folks. You get to throw those in the mix, and you keep adding those. And now after 10 years, people trust our brand enough that they'll say, "The thing I like the most about OffBeat is that even though I don't know a lot of the bands, I know that it's really curated. I know that I could walk into any [venue] and hear something that I find amazing." Yeah, we pride ourselves on that.



Against that backdrop, how has the character of the festival changed over the years?

It really hasn't changed very much. No one's become a millionaire from this thing; it really is a passion project, through and through. Every year, break-even is a win for us. [The challenge] is finding bands that are willing to play. We're more and more involved with agents, and that's a harder game to play. They're the ones that are setting the price, and they're the ones who are helping good things happen for these artists. To the best of our ability, we have to be able to play that game. Sometimes we can, and sometimes we can't. Sometimes, unfortunately, we're offering way less than what they want. But ultimately everything ends up working out, where everyone is happy to be here. But I think for the most part, our approach has been the same. Maybe the scale of OffBeat has got a little bit bigger; we try different things every year. We're including a big, free block party component this year, to give more recognition to the venues where the festival is being held.

You mentioned that among the three original movers and shakers, you're the only one remaining. Are you doing everything?

I'm the tip of the spear for all areas from production to marketing to artist relations to curation, but I have folks who help me in some of those areas. We have an incredible team of volunteers. None of us is getting paid to do this. We have a core group of about 10 people who help me every year.

Speaking of curation, are there any guiding principles that you follow when picking artists to play the festival?

We have to like them! We don't do favors: "I happen to have this guy routing [near Reno]. Would you put him on your festival?" No. If we don't like him, we're not going to put him on the festival.

More than anything, our guiding principle is that we want to make sure that [any artist] who's involved in OffBeat feels that we not only curate the music, but create an experience that's really low-friction. So, for example, every one of our out-of-market artists gets a hotel room. And we give them wristbands so they can go to the whole festival. We have festival hospitality that creates a total VIP experience. A lot of festivals will say, "You get exposure, but we don't have any money to pay you a guarantee." Every OffBeat artist gets paid.

We try to make sure that we incorporate a lot of genres so everyone can find something that they like. And we try to be respectful of our venues; we're not hitting them up for a huge share of the money they're making during the event. They get to keep what they make, and we do what we do, which is sell a wristband [that gets you into all the venues].

And it's not expensive, which is probably why people who hear that say, "No wonder you only break even every year!" I'm definitely a softy; I'm not like that hardened personality that you might think of when you think of concert promoters. I probably have failed that class.



How many acts are on the bill this year?

By the time you total our paid and free shows, we usually have around 70 performances, and nine stages. So about 65 to 70 bands. And about 20% of those are local or regional.

How many people do you expect will attend?

Overall capacity for the whole event is 2,500 people; we're small. The beauty of it is that we don't have any really big rooms. So over the years, you might have seen Blitzen Trapper or Built to Spill play in a 200-person capacity room. You get to have experiences where you're seeing bands that really should be playing in front of a thousand people, and you're getting to see them in a room with 150 people. It's a cool experience. And the music is perfect for the venues.



What's your vision for the future of the OffBeat Festival?

What fills my cup, so to speak, is the relationships. Not just with the artists, but with the community. People see a benefit in this and understand what it means to have a music discovery festival of this kind in Reno. Over the past ten years, we've brought almost 500 discovery acts to Reno. We have really changed the landscape of [tour] routing; agents are now reaching out to us.

I'm in the process of converting OffBeat from an LLC to a nonprofit. We're going to call it the Offbeat Music Society. And part of our mission is not only to put on this festival, but also to help turn the area where we're doing the festival into a real true music discovery entertainment district. We have eight or nine venues that are always activated, [featuring] music that you maybe never have heard of before. But people are willing to head down there because they know it's a good place to be.

We're never going to have the gravitational pull of 6th street in Austin or Lower Broadway in Nashville. But a part of our mission is to see if we can help plant the roots for helping position Reno as that place where music discovery can happen. And then we'll see what good things come from that.

Tickets and more information at <https://www.offbeatreno.com/>





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Robin Trower's 21st Century Blues

by Bill Kopp

Robin Trower is one of rock's true guitar heroes. The London-born musician got his professional start forming and leading the Paramounds, an Essex beat group that would during its seven-year run feature four members who would go on to Procol Harum. By 1967, Trower joined the newly-launched progressive band that had just released its debut single, the classic "A Whiter Shade of Pale."

He remained with the band through 1971, recording five albums, all of which were hits in the U.S. But by 1971 Trower had begun to focus less on the progressive sounds of Procol Harum and more on a heavy blues-rock style informed by The Jimi Hendrix Experience. He left the group and launched a power trio of his own, charting a distinctive musical path that won him a dedicated and sustained fan base.

Between 1973 and 2025, Robin Trower has recorded and released more than two dozen studio albums (not even counting numerous compilations and reissues) and more than a dozen live albums. In testament to both of those achievements, Trower remains busy at age 80; he released his latest studio set, *Come and Find Me*, earlier this year. And as he told *Rock On* in a recent conversation ahead of his current tour, he's readying another live and studio album.



ROBIN TROWER



Let's go way back. What was your introduction to the blues? And did it come before the Paramounts and Procol Harum?

I've got a feeling I was already in the Paramounts when I first heard B.B. King's "3 O'Clock News." I think that was the introduction. And then I just started hunting out more stuff from there.

Was the blues your favorite and preferred style of music from the very beginning?

Well, up to that point, I've been very much a rock 'n' roll fan. As I say, after I started to get into BB King, then I looked around and found other people: Howlin' Wolf, Muddy Waters.

You began having co-writing credits with Procol Harum around the time of 1969's A Salty Dog. Did you have to push to be involved in the group's writing, or was it welcomed?

It was usually Gary [Brooker]'s idea that I come up with something, just as a different sort of string to the band's bow, as it were.

Procol Harum released your song "Whisky Train" as the single off of the 1970 album Home. That track seemed to hint at the direction that you'd follow in your solo career. Arguably, it fits into your body of work far more than it does into the Procol Harum catalog. Was there a specific moment during your time in the band at which you realized, "I really need to go my own way, go solo"?

I think it was when I was starting to write a bit more on Broken Barricades [1971]. I started to realize I was coming up with a lot of guitar-based songs, and that there wasn't really space in Procol Harum for it all. So I would have to do my own thing, have my own band.

You mentioned Broken Barricades. My favorite performance by you during your years in Procol Harum is "Simple Sister." That song has a very strong, sharp riff, and it also has the Procol Harum progressive, semi-orchestral approach. The song is credited to Brooker and lyricist Keith Reid; did you have a hand in writing that song's signature guitar part?

No, no. That was Gary's song. And I really love the music.

Your 1973 album Twice Removed From Yesterday was a very strong debut, and it received very positive reviews. Yet it didn't really sell in great numbers. Did that muted success concern you at the time, a sort of, "Oh, what have I done?"

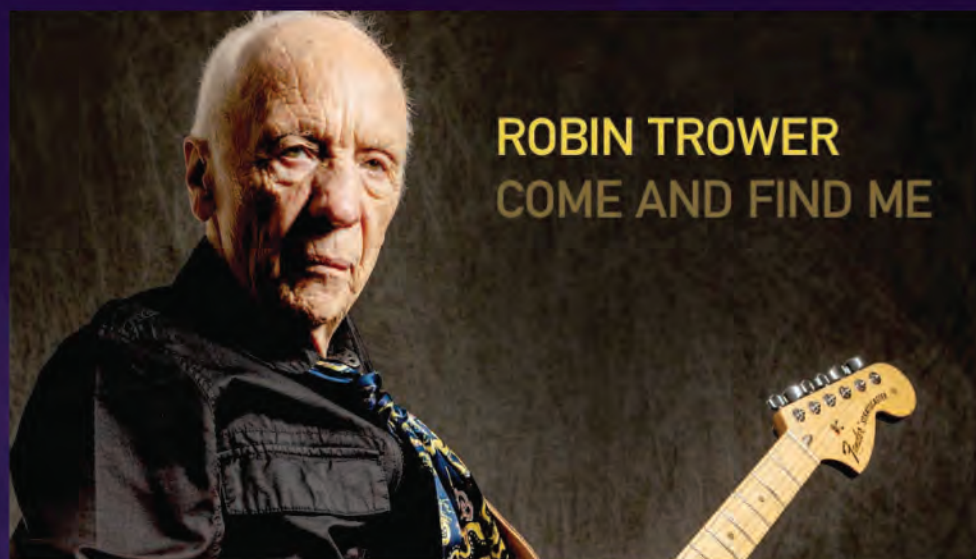
No, not at all. I mean, I was selling records, never mind about how many! It was good.

Your solo career did truly take off with 1974's Bridge of Sighs and For Earth Below [1975]. Were you at all surprised at the commercial success of those albums?

I think I was, a little bit. I think we all knew when we were recording Bridge of Sighs that it had a real potency, but you can never tell how people will take to it, you know. So yeah, I think it was a bit of a surprise.

For Earth Below has just recently been reissued in expanded form, with bonus tracks, outtakes, alternates and a complete live show. It's a really nicely put together package. How involved do you get in those expanded reissue-type projects?

The only thing I do... I have to pass everything new that they're they're adding. I have to hear it and pass it. Otherwise they put it all together at Chrysalis Records. And I think they do an excellent job.



Are there more such projects in the pipeline?

Yes. I think they're wanting to do a reissue of the original live album [1976's Robin Trower Live! recorded in Stockholm, Sweden]. So that should be interesting, with a remix.

After years with James Dewar on bass, did you change your approach to playing guitar at all when you made the two albums – 1981's B.L.T. and Truce from '82 – with former Cream bassist-vocalist Jack Bruce?

No, I don't think I did. I think my approach has always been that I'm trying to move forward and be creative. Working with Jack was different, but I don't think it really changed anything about my own style.

Did that trio – you, Jack Bruce and drummer Bill Lordan – ever play any live dates?

No, we didn't. We talked about it, but by the time the second one was out, I was already moving on, thinking I'd like to try something else.

When you write lyrics, from where do you draw your lyrical inspiration?

I think it's genuine creativity. I think that reading a lot gives you vocabulary; maybe phrases and stuff like that. But I think it's just the blessing of creativity, really.

On your new album Come and Find Me, "Tangled Love" is certainly a standout track with Jess Hay's lead vocal. To my knowledge, other than Sari Shore's work on 2023's Joyful Sky, it's one of the few times that you've recorded with a female vocalist...

That's right.



The female voice is a different instrument than the male voice. Does working with a female singer call upon or inspire you to bring a different approach to your playing?

To be honest, if it had been Richard [Watts] singing them, I don't think I would play it any different. It's just [about] choosing the right material I've written that I think might suit a female voice; that's really the key. Obviously, on lots of [songs with a female singer] I have to play in a different key than they were written in. So that's a sort of compromise.

Your guitar work is so fluid and precise. Do you practice?

Yeah, every day.

What is your practice regimen like?

Oh, I just basically doodle and try and come up with new songs as well at the same time. I'm always looking for new ideas on the lead stuff that gives me a little sting in the heart. And I have to play every day, because otherwise I lose my calluses. That's a big deal.

What inspires you to keep recording and playing live after all these many years?

Well, I love it! I love playing the guitar, I love doing shows, and I love being in the studio. While I keep writing new material, I have to keep recording. And the natural follow-on from that is to play live as well.

What's in the future for you after this run of live dates?

Well, I've got a live album coming out. It's taken from the U.S. tour that we've just done. And I'm very happy with that. And in the new year, I'm going to finish off another studio album. So there's a lot in the pipeline.

Robin Trower comes to Harrah's Lake Tahoe on Friday, Sep. 26.





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FOREVER GONE BUT NEVER FORGOTTEN

Ozzy Osbourne

December 3, 1948 – July 22, 2025

John Michael "Ozzy" Osbourne was an English singer, songwriter, and media personality. He co-founded the pioneering heavy metal band Black Sabbath in 1968, and rose to prominence in the 1970s as their lead vocalist. During this time, he adopted the title "Prince of Darkness". He performed on the band's first eight studio albums, including Black Sabbath, Paranoid (both 1970) and Master of Reality (1971), before he was fired in 1979 due to his problems with alcohol and other drugs. Osbourne began a solo career in the 1980s and formed his band with Randy Rhoads and Bob Daisley, with whom he recorded the albums Blizzard of Ozz (1980) and Diary of a Madman (1981).



Malcolm-Jamal Warner

August 18, 1970 – July 20, 2025

Malcolm-Jamal Warner was an American actor, musician and poet. He rose to prominence for his role as Theodore Huxtable on the NBC sitcom The Cosby Show (1984–1992), which earned him an Emmy nomination for Outstanding Supporting Actor in a Comedy Series at the 38th Primetime Emmy Awards. He was also known for his roles as Malcolm McGee on the sitcom Malcolm & Eddie (1996–2000), Dr. Alex Reed in the sitcom Reed Between the Lines (2011, 2015), Julius Rowe in Suits (2016–2017) and Dr. AJ Austin in the medical drama The Resident (2018–2023).



Loni Anderson

August 5, 1945 – August 3, 2025

Loni Anderson was an American actress. She is best known for playing receptionist Jennifer Marlowe on the CBS sitcom WKRP in Cincinnati (1978–1982), which earned her nominations for three Golden Globe Awards and two Emmy Awards.



Hulk Hogan

August 11, 1953 – July 24, 2025

Terry Gene Bollea, better known by his ring name Hulk Hogan, was an American professional wrestler and media personality. Hogan was widely regarded as one of the greatest and globally most recognized wrestling stars of all time. He won multiple championships worldwide, most notably being a six-time WWF Champion. He is best known for his work in the World Wrestling Federation (WWF, now WWE) and World Championship Wrestling (WCW).



Brian Wilson

June 20, 1942 – June 11, 2025

Brian Douglas Wilson was an American musician, songwriter, singer and record producer who co-founded the Beach Boys. Often called a genius for his novel approaches to pop composition and mastery of recording techniques, he is widely acknowledged as one of the most innovative and significant songwriters of the 20th century. His best-known work is distinguished for its high production values, complex harmonies and orchestrations, vocal layering, and introspective or ingenuous themes. He was also known for his versatile head voice and falsetto, which degraded after the 1970s



Anne Burrell

September 21, 1969 – June 17, 2025

Anne W. Burrell was an American chef, television personality, and instructor at the Institute of Culinary Education. She was the host of the Food Network show *Secrets of a Restaurant Chef* and co-host of *Worst Cooks in America*. She was also one of Mario Batali's sous chefs in the *Iron Chef America* series and appeared on other programs on the network such as *The Best Thing I Ever Ate*.



Val Edward Kilmer

December 31, 1959 – April 1, 2025

Val Edward Kilmer was an American actor. Initially a stage actor, he later found fame as a leading man in films in a wide variety of genres. Kilmer started his film career in the comedy films *Top Secret!* (1984) and *Real Genius* (1985), before transitioning to dramatic films. He rose to prominence for playing Iceman in *Top Gun* (1986), Jim Morrison in *The Doors* (1991), Doc Holliday in *Tombstone* (1993), and Batman / Bruce Wayne in *Batman Forever* (1995). He also gained acclaim for his roles in *Willow* (1988), *Thunderheart* (1992), *True Romance* (1993) and *Heat* (1995).



Eugene Allen Hackman

January 30, 1930 – February 18, 2025

Eugene Allen Hackman was an American actor. Hackman made his credited film debut in the drama *Lilith* (1964). He later won two Academy Awards, his first for Best Actor for his role as Jimmy "Popeye" Doyle in William Friedkin's action thriller *The French Connection* (1971) and his second for Best Supporting Actor for playing a villainous sheriff in Clint Eastwood's Western *Unforgiven* (1992).



Kris Kristofferson

June 22, 1936 – September 28, 2024

An American singer, songwriter, and actor. He was a pioneering figure in the outlaw country movement of the 1970s, moving away from the polished Nashville sound and toward a more raw, introspective style. During the 1970s, he also embarked on a successful career as a Hollywood actor.





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