

Your Posse leader attended the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame Induction Ceremony at Brooklyn's Barclays Center, where (not in order) the following were inducted: KISS, Nirvana, Peter Gabriel (already in as the leader of Genesis), Linda Ronstadt, Cat Stevens/Yusuf Islam, and Hall & Oates. Bruce inducted his own posse, the E Street Band (in the sidemen/ "musical excellence" grouping), and managers Brian Epstein (most notably The Beatles, but several other Merseybeat performers as well) and Andrew Loog Oldham (predominantly The Rolling Stones). I was, of course, in Hog Heaven much of the evening, which went for almost 5 hours.

The worst: every goddamned E Street Band member got up and read a 10-15 minute thank you to Bruce, God, their parents and babysitters, etc, even former members and Clarence Clemons' widow, who not only went on about him but played a phone message he had sent her. I knew we were in trouble when former (and original) band member David Sancious got up first and pulled out several sheets of paper. (Plus, the guy next to me insisted he was Latino, misunderstanding Sancious for the homophone Sanchez; he also sinned by omission, not recognizing Vini Lopez.) Ironically, Sancious now plays in Peter Gabriel's band, and he was there to play in both groups. They really need to reevaluate letting all the members speak, and god forbid if all Santana's current and former sidemen are inducted. I will say this—Bruce is not only among the best rockers of all time, he is the best storyteller and by far, the best speaker: after hearing his talk at SxSW last year, I almost gave up public speaking, on the grounds that I could never be as good as he is, even in my own fields. Listen and judge accordingly:

<http://www.npr.org/2012/03/16/148778665/bruce-springsteens-sxsw-2012-keynote-speech> .

The best (A+): Cat Stevens/Yusuf Islam (backed by Paul Schaefer and the Letterman band) singing "Father and Son," "Peace Train," and "Wild World." After "Father and Son," where I was in full tears, he said, unnecessarily, "did you ever think you would hear that again?" The answer is no, and it made up for the longwinded E Streeters. He was inducted by Art Garfunkel, and his own acceptance speech was modest and, I think, unrehearsed, and he killed when he said, "I never thought I would be on the same stage as KISS." Brooklyn is, I am told, KISS-Country, a place where I do not want to live.

Also great (A): Linda Ronstadt does not travel anymore, due to her health, so she was covered by Carrie Underwood ("Different Drum"), Bonnie Raitt and Emmylou Harris ("Blue Bayou,") Sheryl Crow ("You're No Good,") Stevie Nicks ("It's So Easy.") All of them sang "When Will I Be Loved?" and were joined by Glenn Frey, who inducted her with much grace and love. It is hard to believe that

he and the Eagles were her original back up band after she left The Stone Poneys to go on her own. It also showed how she had been left out for wayyyyyy too many years. I believe she is the best woman rock and roll singer, and it was cruel to induct her only after the sunset of her MS life. I wish that Dolly Parton had joined them, as she had joined Linda in a wonderful trio with Emmylou. I had heard of Carrie Underwood, but I do not follow country music carefully, and so had no idea just how rock and roll-ish and wonderful she is. I will not make that mistake again.

Also great (A-): Nirvana was inducted by REM's Michael Stipe, including the surviving members (David Grohl of The Foo Fighters and Krist Novoselic), who were also joined by Pat Smear, channeling Kurt Cobaine. (Cobaine's mother and widow showed up as well, another change that should be made to shorten the time.) For such a guy's band, it was very interesting to see Joan Jett ("Smells Like Teen Spirit,"), St. Vincent/Annie Clark, (who killed on "Lithium,") Lorde ("All Apologies"), and Kim Gordon ("Aneurysm.") BTW, I have been listening all semester to Lorde's cd "Pure Heroin," which is quite extraordinary, especially "Royals."

Pretty good (B+): Peter Gabriel was joined by Youssou N'Dour on my favorite PG song, "In Your Eyes," which is not only a great song, but was used in the 1989 film *Say Anything* in a fantastic and iconic scene where John Cusack holds his big boom box above his head to win over his love interest, Ione Skye. Footnote: Q: who is Ione Skye? A: she is Rock and Roll Hall of Fame inductee Donovan's daughter.) N'Dour deserves to be in the Hall of Fame.

Hall & Oates were also inducted (by Questlove of The Roots) and played.

KISS was inducted and did not play. They were not in KISS-drag, so I honestly did not recognize any of their faces.

There was no traditional closing jam with all the performers, but all of us had low blood sugar by then anyway.

Set your tv recorder for May 31, when the whole thing will be broadcast on HBO. I will watch it all over again, in my favorite Santa Fe chair, where I can zip through the spare parts and concentrate on the gold. I also spent five hours at the only other such expensive event I have attended, when I went to the third game of the World Series of 2005, where the Astros lost to the Chicago White Sox in a 16 inning game, 7-5. Let me just say that driving home at 2:00 in the morning after your team loses a game it should have won is the dictionary definition of the "tragedy of

defeat.” I had to mortgage children for the World Series tickets and these, but they were both worth it. I am a very lucky boy, and lead such a great life.

Speaking of NM, I will be recording several new Law of Rock and Roll classes at KANW after we return there on May 15—not that I am counting the days or anything. Up next: programs on immigration, criminalizing rap lyrics, taxation, and many other great topics.

Michael

Upcoming shows: The Zombies (d/b/a Colin Blunstone and Rod Argent) and Bruce (I hope with no speechifyin’ from the Band) before we leave Houston, and Journey (in NM).