Madonna’s Celebration Tour Pays Heart-Felt Tribute to Those Lost to AIDS

With help from The AIDS Memorial, Madonna shows the HIV/AIDS community that she cares—and still carries her personal losses close.

October 16, 2023 By Shawn Decker

Madonna has always been there for the HIV/AIDS community and she has been one of the most public of cheerleaders for those with a medical condition that lives off of silence, fear, stigma and shame. As someone diagnosed just before puberty hit in 1987, I have always been aware of Madonna’s insistence on making compassion for those living with HIV part of her pop star persona...

And it certainly won’t go unrecognized or appreciated now!

What exactly am I on about?

Over the weekend Madonna kicked off her Celebration Tour in London. In a concert that highlights music spanning her 40-year career, she took time to pay homage to the HIV/AIDS community by showing the faces of those we’ve lost. Pink News described the tribute:

> “While singing in an open-air box that moved across the stage, pictures of those who lost their lives [to the epidemic] appeared on screens across the arena, including artists Keith Haring and Martin Burgoyne, photographer and director Herb Ritts, singer-songwriter Sylvester and legendary Queen frontman Freddie Mercury.
>
> “Madonna, 65, embarked on the moving tribute after performing the comparatively upbeat dance hit ‘Holiday,’ which served as an anthem of respite for the LGBTQ+ community during the crisis.
>
> “During the performance, one of the dancers surrounding Madonna dropped to the ground, as if lifeless. The singer then placed a sheet over the performer and transitioned into the moving rendition of ‘Live to Tell.’”

The images were submitted to and enshrined online by the AIDS Memorial, a beloved online resource where people pay tribute to loved ones by sharing some of the joys and struggles about

HIV’s impact on their lives.

Here’s what The AIDS Memorial and Matthew Hodson, the executive director of aidsmap, posted about Madonna’s moving tribute:

View this post on Instagram

A post shared by THE AIDS MEMORIAL (@theaidsmemorial)

The loss of colleagues, friends and lovers to #AIDS played a huge role in Madonna’s formative years. She became a champion for people living with HIV. She paid tribute to those who died in one of the most moving sequences of the #MadonnaCelebrationTour. We carry them with us. https://t.co/tXmVNl6etR pic.twitter.com/k1QzvrNFOP

— Matthew Hodson (@Matthew_Hodson) October 15,

2023

And here are two clips from the AIDS memorial section of Madonna’s concert, posted by fans:

Madonna’s Celebration Tour version of Live to Tell dedicated to lives lost lives to AIDS, including her best friend Martin Burgoyne pictured behind her here, was beautiful and incredibly moving.
pic.twitter.com/vKr4ibon9H
— Nick Levine (@mrnicklevine) October 15, 2023

Sylvester, Cookie Mueller, Leigh Bowery, Robert Mapplethorpe so many others lost to AIDS honored by Madonna singing “Live To Tell” at the opening night of her Celebration Tour in London
???? @georgieboyg#madonna #celebrationtour #sylvester #cookiemueller #robertmapplethorpe #AIDS
pic.twitter.com/wgZvZgMjB3
— Dark Entries Records (@darkentriesrecs) October 14,

2023

I’ll let Madonna have the last word, but not without expressing my gratitude for her consistent and compassionate attitude toward the HIV/AIDS community. Also sending my heart and love to The AIDS Memorial and everyone who shares a piece of their lives and soul through the fond memories of someone who will always be missed, and will always be loved.

Thank you LONDON!

Opening Night!

An Evening i will never forget.

????????♥#MadonnaCelebrationTour

pic.twitter.com/qA5EJXeqly

— Madonna (@Madonna) October 15, 2023

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http://beta.docker.poz.com/blog/madonna-heartfelt-tribute-celebration-hiv-aids-community