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Lightning Rod

Love him or hate him, Stewart heads a trio of stars passing through D.M. the next 3 days.

By DREW MANROE
 SPECIAL TO THE REGISTER

Few people divide public opinion like Rod Stewart.

Some swear by the tough, Stonesey sound of his early work. Others swear at the sound of subsequent hits like "Da Ya Think I'm Sexy?" and "Some Guys Have All the Luck" - not to mention Stewart's prancing in videos for those songs.

(You need to see "Some Guys" on YouTube. Like a Bill Cosby sweater put to music, it's a hilarious reminder of just how garish the 1980s were.)

Stewart might not have fulfilled the promise of his early-'70s output. But even if you believe Rod the Mod turned out to be Rod the Fraud, there's no denying that, at 62, he's been one of music's most enduring figures.

And all phases of his career - including the current one in which he reinterprets old pop and rock standards - will be represented at Saturday night's concert at Wells Fargo Arena.

If there's any doubt that Stewart still has his share of devoted fans, concertgoers such as 69-year-old Emily Davis will set the record straight.

"I might run on stage and give him a big kiss," joked the Melcher-Dallas resident, who will be attending the show with her daughter. "He'll probably say, 'Who is this crazy old lady?' But I think he's sexy, and I just might do it."

Stewart's set will include most of his hits, as well as highlights from his 2006 album, "Still the Same ... Great Rock Classics of Our Time."

Which is fine with Davis.

"I like all of his music," she said. "And I really love the stuff he's putting out now. The standards from my era."

While Stewart's fans are eagerly awaiting his arrival, he's not the only big name on his way to central Iowa in the next few days:

- Peter Frampton, the '70s icon and singer of "Baby, I Love Your Way" and "Show Me the Way," will be performing at 7 tonight at Prairie Meadows Events and Conference Center in Altoona. His always-entertaining live act spawned "Frampton Comes Alive!" - the 1976 double-LP that for years stood as the best-selling live album of all time. (\$35, www.ticketmaster.com)

- Kenny Chesney will follow Friday night. He performed in Iowa as recently as last May, but this is the first time his anthemic country-pop will hit Wells Fargo Arena - a venue that should suit it



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Details

Who: Rod Stewart

Where: Wells Fargo Arena

When: Saturday, 8 p.m.

How much: \$55-\$126,
www.dahlstickets.com

If ya want Rod's music ...

Start by downloading these five career-spanning tracks:

"Maggie May" (1971) — Bruising seduction tale hasn't aged a bit.

"I Don't Want to Talk About It" (1975) — One of the singer's most heartfelt (and least syrupy) ballads.

"Da Ya Think I'm Sexy?" (1978) — Love it, hate it, laugh at it, you should hear it. Check out that Abba-esque synth line.

"Downtown Train" (1989) — Soaring chorus makes this Tom Waits-penned hit more agreeable than most of Stewart's from the era.

"If Not for You" (2006) — Solid product of Rod's metamorphosis into crooner of yesteryear classics.

perfectly. (7:30 p.m. Friday, with Pat Green and Sugarland.
\$67.50, www.dahlstickets.com.)

So, wake up, Maggie. Three stars. Three days.

Drew Manroe is a freelance writer from Des Moines.

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