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Hollywood Bowl cancels summer concerts due to virus

The Hollywood Bowl scrapped its entire summer concert season Wednesday due to the coronavirus crisis, in a “devastating” move that leaves the Los Angeles Philharmonic with an \$80 million shortfall. The famous open-air California venue has hosted acts from the Beatles to Yo-Yo Ma over nearly a century, and its concerts from June through September are a staple of Los Angeles cultural life. “We are all broken-hearted by the effects of this crisis and share the disappointment of all those who look forward to the Bowl” concerts, said Los Angeles Philharmonic Association CEO Chad Smith in a statement.

It marks the first summer without concerts since the venue, known for its distinctive shell-shaped stage nestled in the Hollywood Hills, opened in 1922. Andrea Bocelli, Bob Dylan and Diana Ross were among the artists scheduled to perform this summer. The venue also hosts film screenings and sing-alongs. The move confirms a precarious financial situation for the LA Philharmonic, which co-manages the Bowl and schedules its summer season. The company had

already scrapped spring concerts at the downtown Walt Disney Concert Hall and drawn on its endowment.

On Wednesday, it announced further cost-cutting measures for the summer. A quarter of non-union employees and the Hollywood Bowl Orchestra will be furloughed, on top of previous salary reductions and part-time layoffs. “We are doing what is necessary to ensure that we are all here for the next century,” added Smith. California has registered nearly 70,000 cases of coronavirus so far with more than 2,800 deaths. Los Angeles County alone accounts for nearly half the cases and more than half the deaths.

Los Angeles Mayor Eric Garcetti has warned that large gatherings including concerts and sporting events may not resume this year. “This decision makes me heartsick for all the County residents who have made the Bowl and the Ford a treasured ritual of each summer, although this is the best decision to make in the face of the threat from the COVID-19 pandemic,” said Los Angeles County Supervisor Sheila Kuehl.—AFP



In this file photo taken on October 15, 2011, Juanes (center) performs at the Clinton Foundation's “Decade of Difference” concert at the Hollywood Bowl in Hollywood, California. —AFP

Johnny Depp ‘non-violent’, says ex Paradis in UK libel case

Actor Johnny Depp has been described as “kind” and “non-violent” by his ex-partner Vanessa Paradis in British court documents that emerged on Wednesday in his libel case brought against The Sun newspaper. The Hollywood star is suing News Group Newspapers, which publishes the tabloid, and its executive editor Dan Wootton over allegations — strenuously denied — that he abused his ex-wife Amber Heard. In an April 2018 article the paper referred to the “Pirates of the Caribbean” star as a “wife-beater”. Two weeks of hearings in the case were due to start in London’s High Court in March but were suspended due to the coronavirus outbreak after two of Depp’s legal representatives had to self-isolate.

It is now set to be tried at the High Court in London in July. Depp’s lawyers want to admit evidence from French singer and actress Paradis, his former long-time partner with whom he has two children. The couple’s 14-year relationship ended in 2012. Depp married Heard three years later, while Paradis went on to wed French director Samuel Benchetrit in 2018. In a witness statement, Paradis said she had known the actor for more than 25 years and they had raised their two children together.

“Through all these years I’ve known Johnny to be a kind, attentive, generous, and non-violent person and father,” she stated. “He was never violent or abusive to me.” At a court hearing conducted remotely over Skype on Wednesday, Depp’s lawyers also said they want to admit evidence from actress Winona Ryder, who was in a relationship with the star in the 1990s. In her statement, Ryder said she could not “wrap my head around” the accusations by Heard that Depp was abusive. “He was never, never violent towards me,” Ryder said. “He was never, never abusive at all towards me.” Depp and Heard settled a divorce out of court in 2017, after Heard had obtained a restraining order against him the previous year. He denies being abusive towards her and has brought separate libel proceedings against Heard in the United States.—AFP



Johnny Depp and Vanessa Paradis

Rose McGowan: Fame prepared me for quarantine

Rose McGowan says fame has prepared her for quarantine “her whole life”. The ‘Charmed’ actress rose to fame starring in the WB Television Network series and she has admitted her worldwide success is very similar to the current quarantine recommendations amidst the coronavirus pandemic as she has been hiring people to keep others away from her for years. Speaking on Channel Q’s Let’s Go There, she said: “I prepared for quarantine my whole life for a long time because I was in this weird position where I had to hire people to keep people away from me. I couldn’t leave my house ... TV fame, you’re in people’s living rooms and they make relationships with you and when you see them, their eyes would, like, dilate.”



Meanwhile, Rose previously admitted she quit acting because it became “so boring” being in front of the camera. In an Instagram post shared in 2015, she wrote: “Thoughts on the current state of tent pole films aka superheroes. I’d like to petition for other stories to be added to the slate. Where are the human stories? I don’t want green goblins and tight outfits. I want intelligence, daring, work that drives society forward. I want a mirror, not every cliché regurgitated ad nauseum. From Scarface, to Lebowsky, to M, to Anchor Man, to the sublime Carol, to Chinatown, to Sullivan’s Travels-. Let’s bring complexity back. Let’s be the badassess we used to be. Open up the director’s chair and it’ll change. #hollywood #directing think of all the stories not on screen because women are blocked by the status quo. Honestly, it got so boring in front of the camera I had to quit. Boring often times egomaniacal tyrants not making art. Hmm.. Why ever should that change? Add women. Change the conversation. Promote depth. (sic).”—Bang Showbiz