

After health scare, Madonna launches tour celebrating 40 years as ‘Queen of Pop’

October 14, 2023

Online Desk: Three-and-a-half months after she was hospitalised with a bacterial infection that forced the cancellation of her 40th anniversary “Celebration” tour, Madonna returns on Saturday with the start of a 78-date tour.

At 65, the singer looks set to put her health woes behind her with a six-month-long tour of Europe and North America starting at London’s O2 Arena.

The tour will also take in the Accor Arena in Paris on November 12, 13, 19 and 20 and the Bell Center in Montreal on January 18 and 20, before winding up at the Palacio de los Deportes in Mexico on April 24.

The show promises to be a “documentary through her vast career” drawing on archive footage and studio recordings from the four decades since her breakthrough single “Holiday” in 1983, according to her musical director Stuart Price.

“A greatest hit doesn’t have to be a song. It can be a wardrobe, it can be a video, or a statement,” Price told the BBC in an interview.

Madonna spent several days in intensive care in New York after being found unconscious in her New York apartment in June.

But the singer was back and fighting fit after her health scare, Price said.

“The person that is going to take the stage looks incredible, sounds incredible, performs incredible,” he said.

The star’s hospital stay meant that the North American leg of the tour — originally due to begin on July 15 in Vancouver — had to be rescheduled with the European leg opening as planned on Saturday.

“My first thought when I woke up in the hospital was my children,” Madonna said in July in a social media post. “My second thought was that I did not want to disappoint anyone who bought tickets for my tour.

“My focus now is my health and getting stronger and I assure you, I’ll be back with you as soon as I can!” she added.

– ‘Material Girl’ –

The Grammy-winning icon behind classics including “Like A Virgin” and “Material Girl” has asserted incalculable influence as one of music’s top stars.

Her decades-long career, which has also taken in acting, film directing and business ventures, has made her one of the wealthiest artists on the planet.

In 2020 she underwent hip replacement surgery following an injury sustained on her “Madame X” tour.

Madonna, whose full name is Madonna Louise Ciccone, was born in August 1958 in Michigan, to parents of Italian and French-Canadian origins.

After starting out as a dancer in the late 1970s in New York with \$35 in her pocket, she went on to win seven Grammy Awards and sell more than 300 million records worldwide.

The show's setlist has been kept a closely guarded secret with scores of hits to choose from.

The show is expected to feature around 45 songs, 25 in their entirety and extracts of around 20 more.

"That was the big challenge," said Price. "In two hours, can you get all of it in? That's hard. But every great moment she's had, we took a bit of it."

The singer known for her sometimes provocative outfits such as the pink conical bra outfit by Jean Paul Gaultier, will be dressed by the Georgian Guram Gvasalia, director of the young label Vetements.

For the first time since her early days, Madonna will not be performing alongside an on-stage band, added Price.

"There are live musicians that perform at different parts of the show," Price said.

"But what we realised is that the original recordings are our stars. Those things can't be replicated and can't be recreated, so we decided just to embrace that."