

Star-Telegram

Fort Worth Symphony Orchestra brings the '70s back to life

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FORT WORTH — Put on your thinking caps before you head to the Fort Worth Symphony Orchestra's "Disco Days and Boogie Nights" at Bass Hall. The concert Friday night was a round of 1970s musical trivia.

What hit song starts with the word *memories*? The theme to what TV show struts *Movin' On Up*? What do a motorcycle cop, a sailor, a cowboy, an Indian chief, a construction worker and a leather biker dude have in common?

And who sang *I Will Survive*?

Conductor Jack Everly led the orchestra and a bunch of talented vocalists in a show that was as nostalgic as it was maddening. I've personally tried to forget my high school days, but it was amazing how only a few notes or a hint of refrain sent a flood of memories pouring back — and released song lyrics long buried.

Who can forget the sweet, hopeful songs of the Carpenters or the thump-thumping happiness of *Dancing Queen*, *Waterloo* and other hits by ABBA? Don't forget the Bee Gees. All were neatly re-created by the close harmony vocal sextet Chapter 6 and Broadway soloists N'Kenge, Farah Alvin and Anne Beck. Their costumes and platform shoes reiterated the spaciness of 1970s fashions — what, really, were we thinking?

Chapter 6's unaccompanied vocalization of Queen's *Bohemian Rhapsody* brought back the operatic excess of that hit, and the ladies ripped through a set featuring the driving *Turn the Beat Around*, *It's Raining Men* and other "disco diva" hits.

N'Kenge sang a searing rendition of Gloria Gaynor's *I Will Survive*.

The orchestra was featured on well-arranged parades of TV hits and popular movie tunes. That was one frustration of the show: The songs were jumbled together in one-tune-after-another medleys.

But the concert was an evening of throwback fun.

If the singers' aluminum foil jumpsuits didn't make you long for vests and bell-bottom jeans, well, you just weren't living in those goofy, groovy days.

Fort Worth Symphony Orchestra 8 tonight and 2 p.m. Sunday, Bass Hall

\$26-\$78

www.fwsymphony.org; 817-665-6000

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