

CULTURE

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[THE WEEKENDER]



Keith and Mick go back in time with 'Exile'

Charles Watts, left, Mick Jagger, center, and Keith Richards of the Rolling Stones pose as they arrive for the premiere of the documentary *Stones in Exile* in New York on May 11.

PHOTO: REUTERS

The Rolling Stones are releasing one of their best albums with 10 extra tracks, and revisiting their chaotic days in a new film

BY ALICIA QUARLES
AP, NEW YORK

Mick Jagger and Keith Richards are not interested in repeating the past. The legends say if given the chance, they would not try to relive their wild days with the Rolling Stones.

"We have done it once; don't want to do it again," Jagger says.

That does not mean, however, that they would not re-watch it — and they have done plenty of that lately with the Stones-produced documentary, *Stones in Exile*, chronicling the making of their iconic 1972 album, *Exile on Main Street*.

"It was kind of odd at the beginning, but you get used to it," Jagger said last week. "It is always fun piecing together what actually happened because your memory of that is so long ago, you don't really remember what went on because it is such a long period of time."

The movie is also being paired with the rerelease of the album, with 10 new tracks.

Jagger and Richards talked in separate interviews about their trip down memory lane, trying to improve

upon perfection in *Exile on Main Street*, and, of course, sex, drugs and rock 'n' roll.

AP: How hands-on were you with the project?

Jagger: The film was my baby because I thought it was the best kind of thing to do: evoking a period, to make a film about the making of the record. Normally, these kinds of films are corny, and they are painted by numbers ... What I wanted to do is, I want the viewer to feel like they are really in the period, like they are really stuck in the period. I think in the end we achieved that.

AP: *Exile on Main Street* is considered to be one of the best rock albums of all time. Why add extra tracks and mess with what some think is perfection?

Richards: We had guys searching around in the can, and all of this other stuff came out. We realized we would have finished if we had the time. We were going to put out 18 tracks on *Exile*, so we couldn't force the record company to put out anymore at gunpoint.

They either got left behind because

they were not quite finished, so we finished them after 40 years.

Jagger: Four of them are alternate takes of the ones that are already on there. The most hard work for me was finding the six new tracks and finishing them because they were not finished. The were raw and had never been touched, whereas the tracks that were out on *Exile*, we took them to LA. We did vocals. We put other things on them and mixed them. These had not gone through that process. I had to take that 40 years later and do the process. It was fun because after a while, I just said, "If this was done yesterday, what would you do now?" Don't treat it like it is 40 years ago, the process of it.

AP: Does it trip you out that you are still doing this nearly 40 years later?

Richards: It is weird. You go check out what you have done in the past. You try it. You don't want to go there.

Jagger: It is weird, really. When you do these kinds of things, especially when you are younger, you don't really think of them as a piece for posterity. You are just doing it for that year because next year there

will be another record, so, you don't really think at the time, "This will hold up, or I'm so proud of it. This will be something I will be looking back on in 40 years." You don't think of it. I don't think people in rock music, especially at that time, ever thought like that.

AP: There are so many myths about the time you spent making this album. Was it all sex, drugs and rock 'n' roll?

Jagger: It was very familial because we hadn't had a lot of children around before. We were just starting to have children. I didn't have any children at that point, but we started to have children around. Keith had his first son, and some of the other people around us, not necessarily the band, but people who were working on the record, so it is always good to have a few children.

If you have one, it is not much fun for that child. It is nice to have a gang. That was really nice. Of course, there was sex, drugs and rock 'n' roll, but there was also a good family atmosphere.

Richards: I have been thinking about that. We were on a schedule

where I had to write two songs a day, every afternoon. Then I had to get it down to the basement and get it to the guys to play who would hopefully come back with two tracks in the morning. I couldn't find any time to do porridge [drugs]. There were parties going on, but no more than anywhere else. The baby went to bed at the right time. It was the south of France in the summer. There were a lot of people drifting in and out.

AP: Do you think the Stones have another iconic album in them?

Jagger: Well, you always hope so. You are always proud of the new things you do. You always think, "What I wrote last week is just as good as anything on *Exile on Main Street*." That is what I think.

The thing about records like *Exile* is that they require a big pattern, like an old English table. It requires some time.

AP: Knowing what you now know, what advice would you give to the young you of 40 years ago?

Richards: Don't do this at home.

TOP FIVE MANDARIN ALBUMS

MAY 14 TO MAY 20



1 Jay Chou (周杰倫) and *The Era* (跨時代) with **32.88 percent** of sales

2 Show Luo (羅志祥) and *Dancing King Remix* (舞者為王) with **8.92%**

3 Show Luo (羅志祥) and *Rashomon* (羅生門) with **7.44%**

4 By2 and *Adult Ceremony/ Grown Up* (成人禮) with **6.85%**

5 S.H.E and *SHERO* with **4.07%**

ALBUM CHART COMPILED FROM G-MUSIC (WWW.G-MUSIC.COM.TW), BASED ON RETAIL SALES

PLANET POP

Simon Cowell showed Americans his softer side last week, telling **Oprah Winfrey** he suffered from depression and that he had made "some absolutely horrific mistakes" in the past.

The normally abrasive *American Idol* judge said during an appearance on *The Oprah Winfrey Show* that he was prone to dark moods.

"I get very, very down," Cowell said. "Pretty much depression. [But] what I always say is, 'You're taking yourself too seriously, so stop it.' At the same time, you should never put a painted smile on. When you're feeling down, you're feeling down."

Cowell, 50, who also has his own record label and created the TV shows *America's Got Talent* and *The X-Factor*, said he sometimes felt drained by the demands of his work.

"You just become aware that a lot of people depend on you, rely on you, or you're not giving people the time you should be giving them. It's almost like a guilt thing, and that does drain me," he said.

Often seen as arrogant because of his stinging put-downs to aspiring singers, Cowell admitted that he had a strong ego.

But life hasn't always been kind. He recalled the time 20 years ago when he lost his job, car and home and had to move back to live with his parents in Britain when a business deal went wrong.

"I made some absolutely horrific mistakes. I believed my own ego,

believed my own hype, believed my own abilities, and lots of times it came crashing down," he said. "I thought I was absolutely untouchable."

Cowell's interview with Winfrey was broadcast a week before Wednesday's finale of *American Idol*, which will mark the end of his eight year association with the most-watched TV show in the US.

In another interview last week, the soon to be divorced husband of **Sandra Bullock** says he is probably the "most hated man in the world" for having cheated on the popular actress.

A tearful **Jesse James**, giving his first TV interview since the March split with Bullock, took the blame for the break-up of what had seemed a happy marriage.

"I took a pretty amazing life and amazing success and marriage ... and threw it away by my own hands," the custom motorcycle maker told ABC News show *Nightline*.

James, 41, admitted cheating on his wife of five years. According to media reports, he had affairs with at least four women — one of them while Bullock was away last year filming what would be her Oscar-winning role in drama *The Blind Side*.

Bullock, 45, had given emotional speeches at the Oscars and other Hollywood awards shows thanking James for his support.

Bullock, the star of romantic comedies *The Proposal* and *Miss Congeniality*, left their southern California home when the cheating

allegations broke in the media in March, just days after she won her first Oscar.

She has since filed for divorce, despite revealing that the couple had adopted a baby together in January. She told *People* magazine in an April interview that she would raise the baby alone.

Asked by *Nightline* interviewer **Vicki Mabrey** whether he was "the most hated man in America" — as some US celebrity magazines have labeled him for cheating on Bullock — James replied: "I think 'the most hated man in the world' now."

The interview with James will be broadcast on *Good Morning America* on Wednesday and on *Nightline* on Thursday.

Lindsay Lohan returned to Los Angeles from France on Saturday night, two days after missing a probation hearing that caused a judge to briefly issue a warrant for her arrest.

Wearing dark hat and sunglasses, Lohan, 23, flew into Los Angeles and gave the slip to many of the paparazzi who had been stalking around the air terminal all day, according to media reports, after a week of partying at the Cannes film festival.

The *Mean Girls* actress missed a court hearing in Beverly Hills last week for failing to complete alcohol education classes imposed for a 2007 drunken driving case, angering the judge overseeing her case. She blamed a stolen passport.

But Judge Marsha Revel issued an



Simon Cowell opened up on *Oprah*.

PHOTO: REUTERS

arrest warrant for Lohan on Thursday, and later it was revoked after her legal team posted bail of US\$100,000.

The judge said Lohan must now undergo random drug and alcohol testing, get fitted with an alcohol monitoring bracelet and not drink any alcohol until she turns up in court.

Revel extended Lohan's probation last October and warned her then that she risked being sent to jail. The alcohol education classes are part of the actress's sentence for a 2007 arrest for drunken driving, reckless driving and driving under the influence of cocaine.

Lohan was considered one of Hollywood's most talented young actresses after films like *Freaky Friday* and *Bobby*. But despite three stints in rehab in 2007, her movie career has slumped and her frequent night-clubbing has become a staple of celebrity gossip columns.

— AGENCIES



PHOTO COURTESY OF NOVEL HALL

Dancing for eternity

Akram Khan's first mixed program, 'Gnosis,' brought a fitting end to the Novel Hall Dance series

BY DIANE BAKER
STAFF REPORTER

It was difficult to watch British dancer-choreographer Akram Khan perform on Saturday night at Novel Hall. There was so much going on that the eyes and brain couldn't keep up. If you focused on his arms, you missed the feet; if you focused on the feet, you missed his eyes and head.

His arms and hands — epic poems could be written about Khan's gracefully undulations that swoop and soar and swirl. His feet, bare as needs dictate for traditional Indian Kathak dance, sometimes tapped gently with the beat, other times they stamped so hard you feared either the boards or his feet would break.

In the Indian tradition, the dancer is as much a percussionist and singer as a performer — the three are intertwined, while the focus of the movement is on the vertical, the spiraling of energy in a search for spirituality, for the eternal. There is also a constant conversation between the dancer and the musicians, through body and sound.

The first half of the show was pure Kathak, with Khan showing the benefits of years of training that began when he was 6. It was divided into three segments, the first two pre-set, while for the third Khan brought out a microphone so he could talk to the audience, introducing both the musicians and a little bit about Kathak.

Then he did what he called "a little bit of jazz improv" to demonstrate the interaction and the conversation between dancer and musician, which gave tabla player Sanju Sahai a chance to shine. Khan apparently enjoyed himself so much that this portion ran 20-minutes over its scheduled time. The musicians got a huge and well-deserved round of applause on their own: vocalist Faheem Mazhaf, Sanju Sahai, sarod-player Soumik Datta, cellist Lucy Ralton and Taiko drummer Yoshie Sunahata.

The second half of the show was *Gnosis*, Khan's pairing with Sunahata in a retelling of a tale from the *Mahabharata* of Queen Gandari, who rebelled against being forced to marry a blind king by blindfolding herself, and who went ahead and bore a son even though he was destined to destroy their clan. Khan's retelling focuses on the power of women, and in Sunahata he found a prime proponent. Her queen was regal, determined and never powerless, until the final climatic struggle with her son.

In their solos and in their duets, Khan and Sunahata were mesmerizing to watch: the love, the hate, the battle for control. Having been dispatched by her son, the queen reappears singing (a Japanese love song) that is more a lament full of longing and remorse as her son is torn by what he has done, endlessly circling his hands as if to rid them of a stain. In the end, Khan stands alone, his body rigidly convulsing into a frantic blur as the lights go out.

Gnosis is the first time Khan has performed a mixed program, both Kathak and contemporary dance segments in one show. He said he decided to try it because he was bored and wanted a new challenge because the demands on the body and on the mind for each form are so different.

Here's hoping Khan stays bored so he will do more shows like *Gnosis* — how much more cross-cultural and universal can you get than a Bengali singer singing a Corsican song in the Arabic tradition while a Kathak-trained dancer performs with a Japanese taiko drummer-dancer-singer. The mind boggles.

The power of the show, and of Khan himself, was demonstrated by the fact that more than 250 people stayed around at the end of the performance for a short post-show talk.

Khan's three-performance run this weekend at Novel Hall, his fourth appearance at the theater, brought a fitting end to the Novel Hall Dance series — at least for now. Novel Hall will be closing in November for a six-month overhaul of its lighting and rigging system, so there won't be any dance next May. The series is scheduled to resume in 2012.