

The Waterboys' long-awaited arrival in SA

 By [Terry Levin](#)

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Rock band the Waterboys will be performing in South Africa next week after the original concert was cancelled due to Covid in 2020 and 2021.



Image by Xavier Mercade: The Waterboys are coming to South Africa in November

The creators of iconic anthems such as *Whole of the Moon*, *Fisherman's Blues*, *This is the Sea*, *A Pagan Place*, *How Long Will I Love You* and more 80's defining hits, will perform live at Cape Town's Kirstenbosch National Botanical Gardens, on 25 November and Johannesburg's Marks Park on 27 November.

The band's songs have been performed by artists from Prince to U2 to War on Drugs and Ellie Goulding, who scored a top 3 UK hit with *How Long Will I Love You*. *The Whole Of The Moon* anthem was sung by Prince, The Killers and U2 onstage and Waterboys songs have been recorded by others including Tom Jones and Rod Stewart.

Bizcommunity caught up with lead singer Mike Scott in anticipation of the concert...

 **What did it mean to you when Prince covered your song? How did this happen?**

I guess he just liked the song. He played it twice, once as a piano ballad, and once as a funk Black Lives Matter anthem.

I heard the second, which has been bootlegged, and it was great. I like that he changed it and turned it to his own purposes. We played *Purple Rain* a few times, including at First Avenue in Minneapolis, so we're even now.

■ ***Your latest album is called *All Souls Hill*. Why?***

It's the title of one of the songs, and I liked it as an album title.

And it's original. As far as I know, no one has ever come up with that name before, for a song, book, poem or an actual (or mythological) hill.

I do hope music fans in SA will check it out. Modern Waterboys music is from the same wellsprings as our older music, and it's just as good.

■ ***Which music informed your earlier musical output?***

The music I loved as a teenager - 60s and 70s rock, Motown and soul, Bob Dylan, Patti Smith Group '75-'79, Clash '77-'78, Television's *Marquee Moon*, the 2nd and 3rd Springsteen albums, Van Morrison's *Astral Weeks* and *Veedon Fleece*, the first Velvet Underground album, Lou Reed, Iggy Pop, David Bowie, some Roxy Music.

Also, Steve Reich's minimalist music had an impact on *This Is The Sea*.

■ ***Which contemporary music and genres inspire you now?***

Taylor Swift, St Vincent, Courtney Marie Andrews, and the American band Hiss Golden Messenger.

I like Americana, vintage soul and funk, golden era jazz and the Rolling Stones up to about 1972. That's my speed these days.



Waterboys tour heads to Joburg and Cape Town

20 Oct 2022



■ ***Are there any African or South African artists or musical styles that inspire you? Will you be collaborating with any local artists while you are here?***

We once took some words from an old South African folk song called *When Will We Be Married?*, added some Irish/Scottish fiddle melodies, and turned it into a new song.

No time for any collaborations this time, but I did collaborate with SA visual artist Jacques Coetzer some years ago on a wonderful project in Scotland, where he was an artist-in-residence.

I'm sorry it's taken us so long to get to SA. I'm delighted we're finally making it.

■ ***Is there a dream job, gig or theme tune you would like to be asked to do?***

Remix Elvis' 1969 *Memphis Sessions* with no brief, except my own taste.

■ ***Where will you be performing before your South African gig, what will you be doing on the plane on the way here?***

Our last shows were in Spain a few months ago.

The SA shows are an island of performance in an otherwise quiet time for us. On the plane, I'll most likely be reading a book and talking to whichever bandmate is sitting next to me.

ABOUT TERRY LEVIN

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