



TOP PERFORMER: Elton John belts out the hits at an open air concert at the AECC. Photographs: Kevin Emslie

Rocket man

Music: Crocodile rocker arrives like



BY CALUM ROSS

When Sir Elton John plays I'm Still Standing, he gives the impression that he really is enjoying himself, as the lyric goes, like a little kid.

As images of his various incarnations from a glitter-

"While they may be getting on in years, their music has lost none of its impact"

ing and glittery career were flashed on to a giant screen during the rendition of the 1983 hit, you are reminded that you are indeed watching a true survivor.



Shona Bain and Susan Fraser don a spectacle tribute

And he was not the only one, with the A-list star turning up in Aberdeen on Saturday night with guitarist Davey Johnstone and drummer Nigel Olson, who the rocket man has played with since his

career took off in the early 1970s.

While they may be getting on in years, their music has lost none of its impact.

By the time it came to I'm Still Standing, much of the



Adopting the Elton look are fans, from left, Moira Geddes, Lynne Thomson, Liz Juarez, Rachel Thomson and Alex Walker

Whoops and whistles aplenty for fast-moving dance show



BY SONJA COX



DANSCENTRE DIVAS: Ballet was just one of the dance styles featured in Velocity

Global superstar Elton John was in town, but for me, the best seats in Aberdeen on Saturday night were at His Majesty's Theatre for Danscentre's appropriately named production Velocity.

The final night of a fast-moving, toe-tapping show which spanned three hours of non-stop entertainment seemed to have a cast of thousands and

many wardrobe changes. Combining all aspects of the worlds of dance, music and theatre, themes encompassed Charlie and the Chocolate Factory to Uptown Funk and Swan Lake, and everything in between.

There were surreal moments such as a girl in a giant blueberry popping over the skies of Aberdeen, and a newscaster telling the latest news by way of a giant TV screen, all of which added to the mix of wonderful, funny and clever performances of jazz, hip-hop and contemporary - it was solid

back-to-back entertainment with just two short ice-cream breaks so the young dancers could catch their breaths.

The audience was cleared enthralled with street dance, tap and bal-

"Three hours of non-stop entertainment"

let displays catering for all tastes, with hints of everything from Romeo and Juliet to Grease, ensuring all ages were catered for. Whoops, whistles and

loud applause were plentiful, and a fitting reward for the dancers and choreographers whose performances were nothing less than pure genius.

It was for a good cause too, with Dancing Dads raising money for the Archie Foundation, and adult female classes strutting their funky moves for Breast Cancer Care.

If you were in any doubt about signing your young son or daughter up to dance classes, this show would certainly have sealed the deal. See www.justgiving.com/dancingdads2015

Sir Elton is still standing

candle in the wind to have thousands of fans singing along the granite brick road

14,000-strong crowd were already on their feet, where they stayed for the final flourish.

It is always a gamble to play outdoors in Scotland at any time of year, and many who flocked to the specially-built arena in a car park at the Aberdeen Exhibition and Conference Centre would have done so with slight apprehension.

In the end, the water-proof ponchos handed out by the security guards at the start stayed in their bags, with the clouds even breaking briefly as Sir Elton played Your Song.

Introducing the ballad, which was his first top 10 hit in 1970, the singer paid tribute to his long-term songwriting partner Bernie Taupin, saying that when they wrote it they both realised they had "come a long way" in their artistry.

Two years after that mo-

"Bennie and the Jets was the first of the crowd-pleasers as he rolled back the decades"

ment, in 1972, he played Aberdeen for the first time, at the Music Hall.

He has been back since then, but the gig on Saturday was his first in the Granite City since 26,000 fans packed Pittodrie Stadium in 2004.

"What better way to finish a tour than in Scotland," Sir Elton told the crowd.

Dressed in a green shirt and a black and green sparkly gown, he ended the UK leg of his European tour with a hit-packed set



SATURDAY NIGHT'S ALRIGHT: (from left) Lisa Murray, Claire Beattie and Kellie Duncan have a good at Elton John's north-east concert

that lasted almost two-and-a-half hours.

Bennie and the Jets was the first of the crowd-pleasers as he rolled back the decades, followed soon after by the original version of Candle in the Wind, Tiny Dancer and Goodbye Yellow Brick Road.

While he may be known to the younger generation for his celebrity parties, or for being a friend to the royals and a gay icon, watching

him live reminds you that he is also a supremely gifted pianist.

No moment demonstrated that better on Saturday than his version of Scotland the Brave, played on a saltire-draped piano, which sent the audience into raptures when it segued into Rocket Man.

He went on to rattle out I Guess That's Why They Call It The Blues, The Bitch Is Back, and Saturday Night's

Alright (For Fighting), before rounding off the night with a sing-a-long encore of Crocodile Rock.

Sir Elton has hinted on this tour that it may be one of his last.

As the crowds made their way home from Bridge of Don on Saturday, the night before the summer solstice, most would have been hoping that the sun does not go down on his career just yet.



Elton John gets in full swing during Saturday night's concert



Despite the gloomy weather, fans wouldn't let the sun go down on them as they enjoyed the show

Your say:
What did you think of the show?



"It was the best gig I've been to in ages. I was a bit worried about it being outside but even if it had rained it wouldn't have mattered. Tiny Dancer was my favourite."

Emily Story, 25, teacher, Aberdeen.



"It was an amazing night. Don't Let the Sun Go Down was immense, and Rocket Man got the crowd on their feet. Come back soon Elton."

Catherine Ross, 29, nurse from Edinburgh.



"I thought the outdoor set-up was pretty cool. My favourite songs were Guess That's Why They Call It The Blues and Your Song."

Nikki Cassie, 28, PhD student, Cove.