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The Moody Blues' Justin Hayward Talks Current Solo Tour, Reveals Live DVD Is in the Works



Photo: Marcus Way

The Moody Blues' Justin Hayward is nearing the end of a rare [U.S. solo tour](#) in support of his recent studio album, *Spirits of the Western Sky*. The trek features the singer/guitarist playing acoustic renditions of tunes from the solo effort mixed with selections of songs from the Moodies' catalog.

Hayward is being accompanied by three musicians on the outing -- Moody Blues touring keyboardist **Alan Hewitt**, backing singer **Julie Ragins** and a virtuosic young guitarist named **Mike Dawes**, who also has been serving as the tour's opening act.

Justin tells ABC News Radio that he's been "having a wonderful time" on the trek, and has been pleased to discover "that the songs from the *Spirits* album really do work on stage."

With regard to the set lists he's put together for the shows, Hayward says, "I'm doing about 50-50 of the new album and then Moodies things." In addition to playing some of his band's classic tunes, like "Nights in White Satin" and "Tuesday Afternoon," he notes, "I'm doing some Moodies things that I'd never really done on stage before...And, that's a real pleasure." Among the gems Justin's dusted off for the outing are "New Horizons," "It's Up to You" and "Forever Autumn," the memorable solo tune that he contributed to a 1978 *War of the Worlds* concept album.

Another thing about the concerts that the 66-year-old rocker says he finds gratifying is that he gets the opportunity to present some of the tunes the way they sounded before he brought them to the group. "It's the kind of sound that was like in my music room when I wrote [the songs] in the first place," he explains.

Hayward also points out that he really enjoys playing at smaller venues, where he can hear himself better during the shows and it's easier for him to interact with fans.

The trek, which mainly stopped in cities on the East Coast, comes to an end this Saturday with a concert in Atlanta, but the singer/songwriter is hoping to mount another solo outing that will visit other areas of the States. However, Hayward notes that he'll have to find enough downtime in The Moodies' busy schedule to line up such a trek.

"The priority is always The Moody Blues....The Moodies want to work a lot on the road and there's a lot of stuff coming from the Moodies," he maintains. "But, I'm enjoying this so much, and the songs work so well in this context, so I think I'm gonna look at the next Moodies tour and

maybe continue after that tour with my own little tour again." The Moody Blues' [next outing](#) kicks off September 26 in Louisville, Kentucky, and runs through a November 2 show in Rancho Mirage, California.

Meanwhile, Justin says he's documenting the current tour for a DVD that will be released eventually. "We're working on that as we go along," he says, "but before the end it'll all be there. I look forward to that."

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