Elton John Streams Classic Concerts to Raise HIV and COVID-19 Funds [VIDEOS]

His AIDS foundation launched the COVID-19 Emergency Fund to help vulnerable people living with HIV.

July 15, 2020 By Trent Straube

Are you a fan of “Rocket Man”? What about “Bennie and the Jets” or “Don’t Go Breakin’ My Heart”? Or maybe you prefer Elton John’s ’80s and ’90s hits, like “Sad Song” and “Candle in the Wind.” Whichever of the rock icon’s styles gets you going, now’s a great time to revisit his live performances on YouTube.

To raise funds for the Elton John AIDS Foundation’s COVID-19 Emergency Fund, the legendary musician and advocate is posting archival concert footage on his YouTube channel.

View this post on Instagram

Thank you so much to everyone who has watched my Classic Concert Series on @YouTube so far. And an extra special thank you to those who have donated to our @EJAF COVID-19 Fund. There are 37 million people living with HIV around the world and we cannot lose the gains we've made to end the AIDS epidemic during this time. The next show to go live is my 1989 concert at the Arena Di Verona, an incredible Roman amphitheatre built in 30AD that is one of the most magnificent places to play in the whole world. Tune in on Saturday! ????

A post shared by Elton John (@eltonjohn) on Jul 15, 2020 at 9:25am PDT

Elton John: Classic Concert Series premiered July 3 with his 1976 show Live at the Playhouse Theatre, Edinburgh. Each week, a new concert is streamed. Last week was the magnificent Live at Sydney Entertainment Centre from 1986, and the next show is Live at Arena di Verona from 1989, which premieres at noon, July 18.

Donations can be made directly on YouTube, and clips from the concerts are available for viewing at any time (though the full concerts, each about two hours, do not stay up on the site).

"My foundation's COVID-19 Emergency Fund helps frontline partners prepare for and respond to the pandemic and its effects on HIV prevention and care for the most marginalized communities," John said in a Rolling Stone article on the concert series. "We cannot jeopardize HIV testing and care during this time or else the results could be disastrous for the 37.5 million people living with HIV. So I'm really happy to connect this YouTube Concert series to benefit our foundation's urgent COVID response."

According to the foundation's website, its COVID-19 Emergency Fund made grants of over $1 million to support 43 organizations and have helped provide services and fund HIV meds and personal protective equipment for health care workers. The fund has helped peer navigators at SisterLove in Atlanta and prevention specialists at the Humanitarian Project in Russia.
Visit EJAF.org to learn more.

In related news, John penned an opinion piece in The Atlantic earlier this month titled "We Can't End AIDS Without Fighting Racism."

John lauched his foundation's COVID-19 fund this spring. To watch his announcement, click on this POZ news item.

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