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## Tedeschi Trucks Band performing Feb. 28 in Huntington

By Bill Lynch [lynch@hdmediallc.com](mailto:lynch@hdmediallc.com)

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Tedeschi Trucks Band guitarist and singer/songwriter Susan Tedeschi says the group's latest album, "I Am The Moon," might have happened were it not for a break caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Photos courtesy of David McClister

**HUNTINGTON** — During a year when few concerts were being played in front of live audiences, some artists holed up in their homes and home studios and recorded new material.

“I Am The Moon” by the Tedeschi Trucks Band, who will be performing Feb. 28 at the Keith-Albee Performing Arts Center in Huntington, is not that kind of a record.

Speaking over the phone from her home in Florida, guitarist and singer/songwriter Susan Tedeschi said “I Am The Moon” might not have happened if not for the abrupt stop caused by a global pandemic.

“We’re not used to staying in one spot,” she said.

But instead of taking a vacation or developing a new hobby, vocalist Mike Mattison gave the band a homework assignment.

He’d been going through the Tedeschi Trucks Band’s recent record “Layla Revisited,” a one-time live concert recording of “Layla and Other Assorted Love Songs” by Derek and the Dominos.

Derek and the Dominos was a short-lived rock blues band fronted by guitarist Eric Clapton in the early 1970s. They only released one studio record, but a couple songs from the record became Clapton signature pieces, including “Layla.”

The song and the album were inspired, in part, by a 7th-century romance Clapton read about in “The Story of Layla and Majnun,” a book written by the 12th-century poet Nizami Ganjavi.

Mattison, who has a degree in English from Harvard University, followed his band’s inspiration to cover Derek and the Dominos back to what inspired Clapton.

“So, we got this writing assignment in March or April of 2020,” Tedeschi said.

The members of band read “The Story of Layla and Majnun,” then off on their own, they each wrote. It took them through the end of the summer. Then, the band got together on a farm and shared their ideas.

“It was awesome. It was amazing and Gabe Dixon blew my mind with his song, ‘I Am The Moon,’” she said. “I was like, how are you a man and write this perfect song for a woman?”

Dixon had taken the line from Ganjavi’s poem.

Tedeschi said with five writers working on the project, they got a lot of variety.

Different images and thoughts moved them. Drummer Tyler “Falcon” Greenwell, she said, followed Majnun falling in love and then going mad in the desert. One of those songs became “Circles ‘Round the Sun.”

Mattison’s songs, like “Fall In,” Tedeschi said, had a mystical quality to them. Tedeschi loved the melodic sounds her husband, Derek Trucks, brought to the writing.

“There’s all these cool sides of the band,” Tedeschi said.

The five of them wrote and wrote and wrote, which could have presented a problem when it came time to record.

When artists record, they will often go into the studio with more songs than they need. Through some process of elimination, the best songs typically will win out over the others, leading to an album of 6 to 10 songs.

Tedeschi said as they listened to what they had, the band realized a lot of the material seemed to fit together.

“Well, we had more than two albums,” she said.

Turns out, they had more than three. So, “I Am The Moon” became a concept album in four parts made up of 24 songs.

“So, yeah, it was just one of those things that came together organically,” she said. “It was just one of those things where we had all this time, and the record label was just so excited that we were doing anything.

“And they loved the theme, loved how it told a story and that it wasn’t just a record of some tunes that are discombobulated and had no meaning,” Tedeschi added.

The record label liked the rabbit hole the band jumped down.

“It was, honestly, a pleasant surprise for both us and the label,” she said.

So, it was decided to make the release kind of an event. The record came out in four parts over the late spring and summer of 2022. To help introduce and promote the record, the band worked with Alix Lambert, a filmmaker friend of Mattison.

Tedeschi said she'd done everything from writing television screenplays for shows like the HBO's "Deadwood" to making documentaries on Russian prison tattoos.

"She's a really interesting person," Tedeschi said.

Lambert helped craft videos for each of the album's four movements. None of them were TikTok friendly. Each clocked in at over half an hour.

You can find them on YouTube.

Creatively, Tedeschi says the experience making "I Am The Moon" would be hard to top, and they're not really looking to try right away.

Instead, the Tedeschi Trucks Band is back on tour in 2023. She said they're hitting a lot of the old places, but also visiting new cities and bringing a mix of favorite songs, along with plenty of the new stuff.

They're glad to be out again and able to share the answers to their homework assignment.

"The response has been great," she said.

Tickets for the Feb. 28 performance start at \$65. For more information or to purchase, visit [marshall.edu](http://marshall.edu) or [ticketmaster.com](http://ticketmaster.com).

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## If You Go

Tedeschi Trucks Band

WHEN: 7:30 p.m. Tuesday, Feb. 28

WHERE: Keith-Albee Performing Arts Center, Huntington

TICKETS: Start at \$65

INFO: [marshall.edu](http://marshall.edu) or [ticketmaster.com](http://ticketmaster.com)

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