

Eric Levy on Night Ranger's 'Brain Chemistry' Magic: 15 Years of Rocking America & the New Best Of Era

As Night Ranger drops the remastered '(You Can Still) Rock in America (2026)' single and readies their 'Best Of' album, the keyboardist reflects on live show neuroscience, his 'tight end' role, a career Hail Mary, and why the magic never fades.

Interview by **Paul Salfen**, Text by **Christine Thompson** | **AMFM Magazine**

July 7th, hard rock legends Night Ranger proudly unveil their newly remastered version of the 1983 single "(You Can Still) Rock in America (2026)" — the lead track from their upcoming 'Best Of' album, set for release August 28 via Frontiers Music Srl. The single arrives with an official video, while the full collection delivers remixed and remastered classics alongside standout recent tracks. Available on CD and double vinyl in striking black, gold, and orange splatter editions, it's a celebration of a legendary catalog and 15 years of fresh energy from keyboardist Eric Levy.

In this exclusive conversation with AMFM Magazine's Paul Salfen (and co-host Drew Pearson), Levy opens up about the almost scientific power of Night Ranger's live shows to transport fans — rewiring brain chemistry to recapture the pure joy of youth. He shares his grounded 'tight end' philosophy on band dynamics, the Hail Mary moment Jack Blades' call created, and why every weekend on the road still feels like its own hero's journey. With the summer tour rolling and new music on the horizon, Levy proves some rock legacies only burn brighter with time.



Eric Levy laying it down live with Night Ranger. | Photo: KC Concerts

The Magic That Never Gets Old — And the Science Behind It

From the instant the keyboards ignite, Night Ranger fans know they're in for something special. For Eric Levy, that signature sound and the visceral connection it sparks night after night is nothing short of magical — and it only deepens with perspective.

"It's magical each and every night because... if you hear a piece of music from an earlier part of your life, it can actually change your brain chemistry to mimic the brain chemistry you had at that age. So once I read that, I think I really started to have more of a respect for what it is that we do... That can provide something that people can't get necessarily anywhere else, except at a rock concert of a band that they used to enjoy."

— Eric Levy

He describes watching crowds — especially Gen X fans — singing along to "Sister Christian" and realizing their brains are literally rewinding to high school. "Everybody in the place is singing along and realize that for the average listener who is Gen X, that they grew up with this music and their brain chemistry in this moment is actually making them feel like they're back in high school... and everybody's singing it together. It's a magical thing to be a part of."

More Than Notes: Why Interpersonal Skills Win in Rock 'n' Roll

After 15 years, Levy is quick to credit the people as much as the music. Technical skill gets you in the room, but culture keeps you there.

"The further I get into this business, it's not always about, like, oh, you know, that's the best guitar player... No, it's more than that. It's your interpersonal skills. You're going to get in a relationship with a bunch of guys and go on the road together. It's got to be about more than how you play your instrument at the end of the day."

— Eric Levy on Night Ranger's culture

He calls his bandmates "some of the nicest guys" who "really respect and care about culture" — a refreshing truth in an industry often obsessed with chops over character.

The Tight End's Philosophy: Night Ranger as an NFL Offense

When Paul Salfen asked for advice for aspiring keyboard players and musicians, Levy delivered gold with a football analogy that perfectly captures his humble, team-first approach.

If Night Ranger were an NFL offense: Jack Blades is the quarterback. Kelly Keagy is the star running back who does the dirty work and scores when called upon. Brad Gillis and Carrie are the wide receivers hungry for the spotlight and the big plays. And Eric? He's the tight end.

"Most of the time, I'm gonna block, and I'm gonna be happy to block... it's my job, and it's my role... And once in a while, okay, you know, it's your turn to get the ball, it's your turn to score."

— Eric Levy

It's a powerful metaphor for any creative or professional: know your role, execute it with excellence, celebrate when your number is called, and always put the team's success first. That's how you build 15 years of momentum.



Night Ranger delivering the goods live. | Photo: Geoff Wilbur's Music Blog

The Hail Mary That Changed Everything

Levy's own career-defining moment came when Jack Blades reached out — a true Hail Mary pass.

He was deep in the jazz fusion/world music jam band scene, "driving around the country in a van and very passionate about the music." Then the call: Night Ranger's keyboardist was leaving, they were about to record a new studio album and head out on a world tour with Journey. Was he interested?

"Yeah, it, it, it, in a way, it was like, well, wow, you know, I've invested so much in the jam band scene, and now suddenly I'm just completely in a different direction here. But I'm so happy I did. So, so happy I did."

— Eric Levy on joining Night Ranger

He caught the ball — and never looked back.

Balance, Thick Skin & the Hero's Journey on the Road

For creatives, Levy stresses the delicate balance of self-awareness without self-destruction.

"You've got to be able to... have the self-awareness to realize what you need to do. You've got to have thick enough skin to be like, okay, that wasn't appropriate, and I can realize that and change what I'm doing. Yeah, but at the same time, you can't be so hard on yourself and so critical of yourself that you're like, I suck, I'm never gonna be as good as so-and-so... I really think you need that balance."

— Eric Levy on creative mindset

Touring, he says, mirrors the classic hero's journey from ancient stories: you set out, face challenges, succeed in new places, meet people, grow, and return home transformed — only to do it again next weekend. Even on exhausting travel days, perspective wins: "Why not go play a big rock show? I mean, you know, how fortunate am I in this lifetime?"

What's Next: Summer Tour, Japan, 'Best Of' Album & Hopes for New Originals

The band is already on the road (kicking off mid-July in Colorado and hitting hometowns across America), with a Japan date at the end of August. The 'Best Of' album is a love letter to fans: remixed/remastered versions of the 80s anthems everyone knows, plus curated highlights from the last 15 years with Levy, and fun deep cuts — including a spontaneous live "Feliz Navidad" captured backstage one December and now preserved for holiday playlists everywhere.

Levy is proud of what the band accomplished on the COVID-era ATBPO album but hopes future originals will be made the old-fashioned way — together in the same room. "I am hoping if we do this again that, yeah, we can kind of get back to, like, being in the same room with each other, and have it be more of a... something that we're doing together."

The Legacy Continues

Whether you're a longtime fan whose brain lights up at the first notes of "Sister Christian" or discovering these anthems fresh, Night Ranger's music delivers that rare, timeless rush. Eric Levy's 15-year ride proves that when talent, character, and joy align, the best chapters are still being written.

Stream the new remastered single "(You Can Still) Rock in America (2026)" now, watch the official video, and pre-order the 'Best Of' album on your preferred format. Then catch Night Ranger live this summer — your brain (and your inner high schooler) will thank you.

Follow AMFM Magazine for more exclusive artist interviews, tour coverage, and rock 'n' roll stories told with conscience.
amfmmagazine.com
