

HANGING LIKE A HEX

DEVO, "Live 1980" DVD

If you are at all into live documentation of bands than this is what you need to check out right now. Turn off the computer, get money (rob a crackhead, anything), go to the local cool record store/video emporium, and force the clerk to give this to you by any means possible. This is, hands down, one of the coolest live performances I've ever seen put onto video. Plus, for 1980 (in which it was filmed) it is incredibly sharp, with excellent sound quality for a band that was decades ahead of their time. They open with the obligatory "Whip It", the whole band decked out in the jumpsuits and flower pot helmets, stiff robotic movements as their means of 'rocking out' (check the current stage maneuvers of The Locust as more-or-less tribute to the awesomeness of Devo). They go through 18 songs non-stop as classics like "Secret Agent Man", "Mongoloid", and "Girl U Want" playing off without a hitch dominate the first half. The halfway mark is punctuated by a crazy light display during "Swelling Itching Brain" as front spud Mark Mothersbaugh convulses out of control, pacing back and forth while ripping his jumpsuit to pieces. The set goes dark, and they re-emerge, helmets and jumpsuits abandoned for sleeveless black shirts and short shorts, as they hurl full-on into the more organic, punk side of their music (the first half of the set is a lot more keyboard and effects laden). They run through, "Mr. DNA", "Satisfaction", "Gates Of Steel", "Freedom Of Choice", "Slap Your Mammy", and more with Mothersbaugh even more out of control, insofar as jumping in the crowd for some sing-along action. I tell ya, it's everything a punk show should be from a band that played music that was so much more than punk and had an insane public following despite the fact that they were so fucking bizarre and brilliant at the same time. These guys were all a bunch of nerds (probably an archetype for "Revenge Of the Nerds") that were probably called faggots on a regular basis by most of society, yet they were one of the best bands around back in the early 80's. Take that assholes. As a bonus this is a double-sided disc with the show on one-side and the other side being an audio-only recording of the show. Unbelievable. Makes me wish I was 20 instead of 3 when this came out. (Music Video Distributors, www.mvdb2b.com)

www.hanginghex.com