



Jesus Jones: Live at the Marquee

Contributed by Brent Simon

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Hey, remember that song about watching the world wake up from history? Well, Jesus Jones sure as hell is hoping you do, because they've gotta eat, suckas!

OK, to be fair, this British quintet is no Right Said Fred. Though the international smash "Right Here, Right Now" rather quickly swallowed up any other lasting identity the band was able to carve out for itself, they did have a handful of other FM charters, and maintained a reputation as college radio darlings for several years after their major label star had faded, courtesy of numbers like "Move Mountains," "International Bright Young Thing," "Never Enough" and the solid B-side belter "Caricature."

The trick was really in their sound, which predated mash-ups and rock sampling and combined elements of dance and techno music with strong melodies and guitar hooks. As flannel-clad grunge swept the nation, it may not have been the most fashionable music at the time, but it holds up quite well, thank you very much.

Jesus Jones: Live at the Marquee, then, features lead singer Mike Edwards and the rest of the band still putting the screws to the wall, and looking like they actually enjoy it. The concert, recorded in London in November of 2002, does a good job of mixing early, *Doubt*-era hits with newer material, including the eerily prescient "In the Face of All of This" (written in the summer of 2001, but lyrically about Afghanistan-born chaos and disorder). Twenty-five tunes get a workout in all, and standouts include all of the aforementioned numbers as well as "Rocket Ships," "Come on Home," "Idiot Stare" and "Chemical Number One."

The DVD includes a two-screen, esoteric, band-authored "biography," which is a cheat and a half because it speaks in broad strokes and doesn't really give you any damn information at all. The at-venue group interview is slightly better, as an off-screen interviewer tosses out song titles in random order and the band members take turns recollecting the genesis of the material over unknowing bellows from assorted grips and crew members. Things eventually warm up, and the group recalls the peculiar hell of shooting music videos, including for "Next Big Thing" as they — irony alert — became rock's next big thing. (Hint: Avoid trapeze work and indiscriminate paint tossing.)

The full screen presentation here could certainly be better — the image grains and blurs just a bit at times, courtesy at least partially of an oversaturated lighting scheme, and I could furthermore do without the handheld camera angle from behind the drum kit. That said, the 5.1 surround sound mix is solid and the actual performance is enthusiastic and properly solicitous: The group knows you might have only heard of a handful of their songs, but they're out to win you over. Mission accomplished, lads. B (Movie) B (Disc)

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