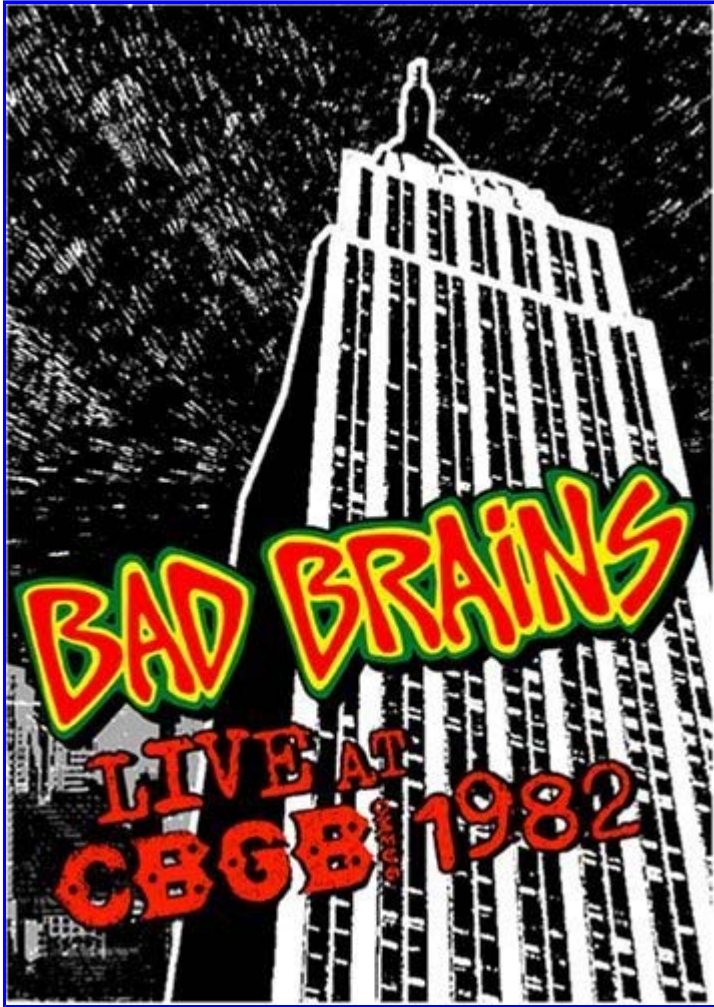


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Bad Brains - Live at CBGB 1982 DVD

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It can be argued that the Bad Brains are one of the most influential bands of all time, not just in hardcore punk circles, but music in general. These four black musicians from Washington DC changed the way people looked at music forever and opened doors for future generations of bands. At their peak in their early years, there was no more powerful force than the Bad Brains. Sadly as time wore on, they damn near tainted their legacy with numerous break ups and scandal especially in regards to lead singer, H. R. The other members even tried replacing him once or twice but it was never the same. The original lineup of the Bad Brains had a magic kind of chemistry that only happens once in a lifetime.

I never got to see the band in their prime, by the time I had ample means to get to the city, it was already the late 1980s and the band had changed directions, or broken up at least once. The best substitute I could have hoped for was for some bootleg video footage, which there seemed to be almost none of that I ever came across. Thankfully 24 years after it was recorded, footage of a trio of shows at New York's infamous (and soon to be defunct) CBGB has been unearthed, edited together and released on this DVD.

While not necessarily the greatest footage known to man, especially by today's standards, for 1982 technology the footage is quite good. The one thing that it did perfectly was capture the energy of their live set. The band's intensity wasn't lost in the footage and at times it damn near gave me chills down my spine because I was in awe of the powerhouse they were back then. From the opening chords, people in the crowd were already climbing up on stage ready to dive off, dance, or sing along with their hardcore heroes. Throughout the entire set the crowd never relented, you can see the energy surging through the place even when the band slowed down and threw in one of the reggae songs. In the rather narrow-minded world that was the hardcore scene back then, it was pretty amazing they were able to play something outside that to at least a somewhat warm response.

For much of the feature, it was filmed on a couple of different cameras from varying angles. Near the end however it seems for one of the shows where footage was used for a few songs, there was only one camera angle and it was from behind the stage, so you see more of the crowd and the back of H.R. than anything else. For 1982 though, the picture is pretty clear and it doesn't detract from the enjoyment. The audio has two options; stereo and 5.1 surround. Neither one of them really stood out as being the superior one, though I think the stereo mix sounded a bit more full to me so that was what I ended up watching most of it with. The disc is packaged in a keep-case and comes with an insert with liner notes on one side and a reproduction of the show flyer on the other which I found to be a nice touch. Bonus features are limited to some interviews with random members of the audience and an audio track of "I and I Survive". The total running time is about one hour and the tracks consisted pretty much everything from the *ROIR album/Rock for Light*.

With not much footage from their early days available, I'm glad something like this was unearthed and I got to see what I missed out on by not seeing them and even though I knew it before, I think I have an even better understanding now having witnessed at least this footage of their live show, just what a truly unique and special band the Bad Brains were back then.

In celebration of this DVD, there is going to be screenings of this at a few select locations in the United States. The schedule for them are as follows:

SAN FRANCISCO, CA - In conjunction with Amoeba & SF Bay Guardian
12 Galaxies - 2565 Mission Street @ 22nd - San Francisco, CA . 94110
Tuesday, September 19th @ 9pm
FREE TO THE PUBLIC

SAN DIEGO, CA - In conjunction with Lou's Records
Lou's Records - 434 North Highway 101 - Encinitas, CA 92024
Tuesday, September 19th @ 7pm
FREE TO THE PUBLIC

PORTLAND, OR - In conjunction with Jackpot Records
Bagdad Theater & Pub - 3702 SE Hawthorne Blvd - Portland, OR 97214
Tuesday, September 19th @ 8pm
FREE TO THE PUBLIC

LONG BEACH, CA - In conjunction with Fingerprints
Murphy's Pub at the Belmont - 4918 E 2nd St - Long Beach, CA 90803
Tuesday, September 19th @ 6pm
FREE TO THE PUBLIC

LOS ANGELES, CA - In conjunction with Tower Records
Knitting Factory, Hollywood - 7021 Hollywood Blvd. Ste. 209 - Los Angeles, CA 90028
Thursday, September 21st - Doors @ 7:30 & Show @ 9
FREE TO THE PUBLIC

WASHINGTON, DC - In conjunction with Tower Records
Black Cat - The Backstage - 1811 14th St. NW - Washington, DC 20009
Thursday, September 21st - Doors @ 9 & Show Time @ 9:30

\$3 ADMISSION

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