



Live @ Hull

801

Expression Records - EXP CD 25R

Available from [Phil Manzanera's web site](#).

A review written for the Folk & Acoustic Music Exchange

by **Mark S. Tucker**

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Live @ Hull is the third in a reissue series of a progressive rock group headed up by Roxy Music's Phil Manzanera, a godsend for devotees of the progrock genre, which has come in, over a three decade period, for a dizzyingly shifting succession of acclaim, rebuke, indifference, and, most recently, rediscovery and applause. Many of the otherwise historically curious low spots can be accounted for in a primarily idiotic punk milieu that birthed itself mid-stride in progrock's peregrinations. Punkers, diving into desperate, and unfortunately successful, attempts to put the kibosh on anything that would show up their principally laughable musicianship, had gained a strong foothold in media and poisoned the waters.

As the punkers have come into maturity, they've inevitably—well, the musicians among them anyway—evolved, and a very minute percentage have become quite good sound artists. Most of the time's pseuds, and they were gawdawfully populous, crashed and burned, if not through horrific abuse of toxic chemicals far outstripping their cousins' (hippies) erstwhile practices, then through thoroughly unsupportable pretensions to slovenly *artistry* even the most fanatical outgrew when waking up again on Monday morning. The vast bulk of the time's output has thankfully gone to the grave with little hope of republication.

Not so with progrock, which survived the onslaught of venom from clowns like John Lydon (Johnny Rotten) and is presently enjoying enthusiastic reconsideration. Where the Sex Pistols used to dwell in the youthful Joe Bourgeois Snotragge's collection, King Crimson now sits, as the trashman escorts Mssrs. Lydon, Matlock, Cook, and Jones to a well-deserved demise in the trash heap. Why? Well, listen to Steve Jones' numbingly boring solo LP, and all becomes quite apparent. Nor is the post-Pistols PIL likely to evoke overmuch enthusiasm, already a completely ignored relic.

Live @ Hull demonstrates fully why Lydon Inc. & Confreres failed so miserably: punk was a slum paradise of void talent whereas 801 and the progressive rock batallion so belittled by it were the exact opposite: dauntingly creative. Punk stole everything they were so fitfully able to imitate (which wasn't much) from the Kinks and the Who, then dragged it through the gutter for that uniquely piquant flavor so unique to the mode, fobbing the result off in a graceless gutter waltz amidst tone-deaf poseurs feasting with panthers, a cadre weekendng away from its Pacific Palisades, Palos Verdes, and Hollywood warrens, the demesnes of the well-to-do white upper middle class and its progeny.

Manzanera and the prog milieu had come mostly from lower middle class families and knew what it meant to do without but were rescued by a rigorous Brit schooling imbuing them with aesthetic basics allowing something Lydon (also English, though, given everything about the idiot, he could well have been the sorry product of American schools) could never hope for: true artistry. Loaded with an appreciation for classical, jazz, and folk musics, the progressive revolution went forth to create what I arrogate is really a side pocket of neoclassicalism, something reflected in a quite decent array of its

repertoire and obvious to intelligent palates.

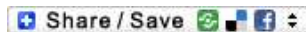
That's what you get here. Even when stripped down, which is the case as opposed to the *801 Live* discs ([here](#)), there's a much richer bedrock, a possession of tools and techniques, an immersion in extrapolation, and so many other factors that went completely missing in punk. 801 is reveling in the rock approach sleeping in the basement of prog (previously, the group had reversed the emphasis). Thus, the listener gets the best of both worlds, seeing where the outré had its real roots and where the normally highminded intellectualism of the genre was able to shed the academy and roothog with rocking and rolling brothers in kindred style.

Look to my reviews of *801 Live* ([here](#)) and *Manchester* ([here](#)) for lengthier expositions on the musical virtues themselves; in this critique, I took the opportunity to polemicize in a manner that probably could be more aptly and genteelly summed up in two Byzantine words: phoque punque.

Track List:

- Lagrima (Phil Manzanera)
- T.N.K (Tomorrow Never Knows) (Lennon / McCartney)
- Flight 19 (Manzanera / I. MacCormick)
- Listen Now (Manzanera / I. & W. MacCormick)
- Law and Order (Manzanera / W. MacCormick)
- City of Light (Manzanera / W. MacCormick)
- Initial Speed (Phil Manzanera)
- That Falling Feeling (Manzanera / I. MacCormick)
- Without Your Love (Manzanera / Nicholls)
- Diamond Head (Phil Manzanera)
- Out of the Blue (Ferry / Manzanera)
- Remote Control (Ian & Bill MacCormick)
- Miss Shapiro (Manzanera / Eno)
- You Really Got Me (Ray Davies)

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