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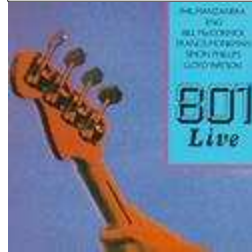


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LOSINGTODAY REVIEWS



801
LIVE: COLLECTOR'S EDITION
(Expression Records)
BY DAVID MANSDORF

801 came about when Roxy Music took a temporary hiatus in 1976 and guitarist Phil Manzanera decided to ring up ex-bandmate Brian Eno and put together a band for three gigs. This live album was recorded at the last of those gigs and consists of selections from Eno and Manzanera's solo albums, Manzanera's pre-Roxy group Quiet Sun, a pair of covers, and strangely enough, no Roxy Music songs. The album exists at a crossroads of Eno and Manzanera's art-rock ideas and the excessive virtuosity of prog-rock. Eno's vocals are typically strong on the eight tracks he sings - after all, this was recorded between his classic albums *Another Green World* and *Before and After Science* - but there's a little too much proggy wanking from the band during the set. In fact, if you removed Eno's vocals from the album you would think 801 were just a bunch of Yes or Genesis-inspired prog rockers. If you can get past the prog-rock aspects - and most fans couldn't, which caused the album to die a quiet death when it was released at the dawn of punk - you'll find some strong material such as the killer versions of The Beatles' "Tomorrow Never Knows" and The Kinks' primal classic "You Really Got Me" as well as their psychotic take on "Third Uncle" from Eno's *Taking Tiger Mountain by Strategy* album, which flips things around by actually getting better when the vocals end and the jamming begins. There's also a second disc taken from recently discovered tapes of rehearsals two weeks prior to the concert. The sound quality of the rehearsals isn't so hot, and all the songs on it were played in the concert, you'll probably listen to them once and file it away.

DAVID MANSDORF