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COCAINE'S A HELLUVA DRUG: JOHN CALE'S ROCKPALAST FREAK OUT, 1984

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Heartbreak
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A helluva Drug



The first in an intermittent series of posts showcasing the most coked-out music performances of recent times, that are still available for the public to see via the magic of [the internet](#).

Cocaine's A Helluva Drug kicks off with this frankly terrifying clip of John Cale tearing up floorboards at the German Rockpalast festival in 1984, as he rips through Elvis' "Heartbreak Hotel" on the piano.

The madness begins at 4:40, and it is preceded in this clip by a relatively sober Cale performing the same track at the same festival one year earlier, which gives great context for just how fucked up he is the following year. Apparently most of the crowd the second time round were waiting for London's white-funk homeboys Level 42.

For the record, Cale's interpretation of this classic is simply astounding, delivered here in a stripped down, chilling arrangement showcasing Cale's delicious butter-from-the-gutter growl.

This is neither a warning nor an endorsement. It simply IS.

John Cale "Heartbreak Hotel" (Live at Rockpalast 1983 & 1984)

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