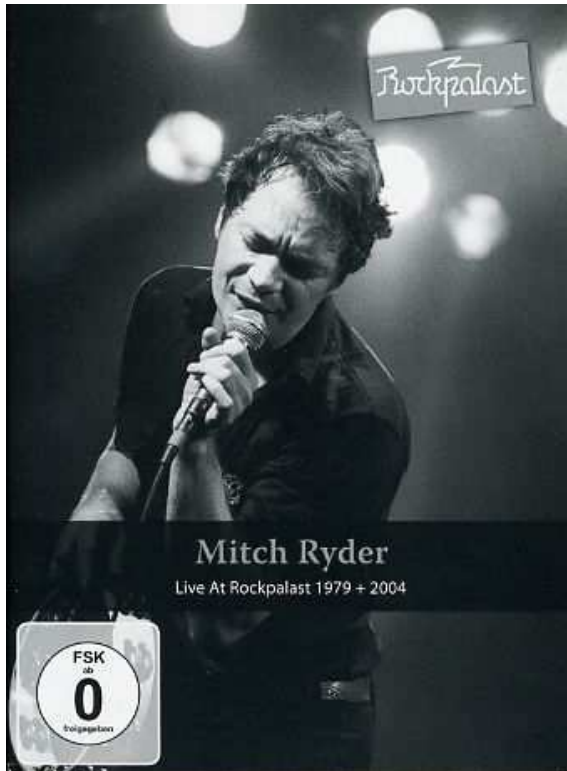


FAME Review: Mitch Ryder - Live at Rockpalast 1979 + 2004 (2-DVD set) or (3-CD box)

[+](#) Share / Save [f](#) [t](#) [e](#) [+](#)


Live at Rockpalast 1979 + 2004

[Mitch Ryder](#)

[MIG Records](#) - MIG 90507 (2-DVD set) or (3-CD box)

Available from [MVD Entertainment Group](#).

A review written for the Folk & Acoustic Music Exchange
by **Mark S. Tucker**
(progdawg@hotmail.com).

The ongoing line of Rockpalast concerts is proving to be quite providential, in many cases showing some well-known names in much greater dynamic range than their studio albums ever revealed. One such example is this one, featuring 60s rock hit charter Mitch Ryder, a 2-DVD set capturing gigs 35 years apart. The '79 concert is highly unusual, though. In it, Ryder's drunk out of his mind—this becomes very apparent in between the first and second songs; I mean, he is fucking plastered!—and in fact almost never got to hit the stage, as promoter Peter Ruchel nearly cancelled everything when the singer arrived with a half-empty bottle of Jack Daniels, both the worse for the wear. Ah, but what magic drugs and alcohol can work!

From the pounce 'n prowl of *War* to the psychedelia of the Doors' *Soul Kitchen* to his Motor Town rock-soul hits to the sardonic comments ("I love very much to abuse my audience"), Ryder displays bacchanalian command in a sometimes languorous but often hurtling set of performances convincingly laid out by a five piece backing band (dual guitar attack [one of the cats looking like a young Larry Coryell], bass, drums, keyboards) in frequently elongated cuts that get the house shakin'. From the moment Mitch lets loose with a set of piercing wails in *War*, if you were in Germany that night, you knew you were in for a time. This in fact may have been the defining moment of Ryder's career.

Few realize it, but he issued 6 LPs with the Detroit Wheels, another one with Detroit, and then an astounding 25 solos, all between '69 and now (including one titled, heh! *The Old Man Springs a Boner*). In 2004, in the Detroit Metro Times, Ryder commented: "Hollywood, that's where I could've gone if I wasn't such a punk. If I just learned to bend over and say thank you a little more politely, it could've been great". I hear ya, Mitch, I hear ya. I think a lot of us understand, buddy. Fully. Much of what transpires here very amply shows he wasn't one of the sheeple. And the guy may be from Dee-Troyt but he's got plenty of the Jersey/N'Yawk squawk to 'im.

The band's superb, with, to my ears, a generous dose of Allman Bros and quasi-Santana, maybe a light touch of Black Oak Arkansas here and there, but red hot and ready to trot. Mitch gives 'em lots of room, too. This is a rock orgy, y'all, with not a minute wasted. Between the music and Ryder's swozzled but impassioned vocals and off-the-cuff remarks, thank Christ Ruchel let 'im go on, 'cause you're not going to find many other gigs like this one. There's a smoldering rebellion, leashed and civilized but borderline or explicitly explosive all the while. If that's what Brother Jack does for ya, I think a lot of us had better start hitting the bottle.

Now come up in time that three and a half decades, and the guys still got the fire. Gone is the bottle, the elegantly smirky cat 'n mouse games with the ticket holders, and the much-remembered youth, but the man and the music remain, and he and the band know exactly what to do, delivering a full two hours with a setlist as varied as the old days—more so, in fact (glance below 'n see). It's a very interesting contrast between the 'don't give a shit' old school and the chastened matured latter days...looking like the third Blues Brother, no less! This is a very good concert well worth the viewing (catch Mitch roaring in *Freezin' in Hell* if you think I'm exaggerating), but the '79 gig is absolute gold, a key rock 'n roll moment for, besides a captivating performance, the sheer typification of the times and attitude. Like so many of us, Ryder wised up and grew up...and those who didn't? You can read about 'em in the obits or catch 'em shouting at passing cars while waving a Bible. It was a very odd era, and Mitch Ryder was one of those who made it out alive and intact

As to the format choice between the 2-DVD set and the 3-CD box, well, that's your call, but if you opt for the CDs, I'm here to tell ya that you still hafta **see** the 1979 concert. It's a must. Oh, I'm not sure what's going on with the credit attributions to the songs written between 'Ryder' and 'Levise', but Mitch's true name is William S. Levise, Jr., sooooooo.....

Track List:

CD 1 / DVD 1: Grugahalle Essen, Germany, Oct. 6th/7th, 1979 CD 2 / DVD 2: Burg Satzvey, Germany, Feb. 27th, 2004

• Long Hard Road (Wayne Mills) (6:17)

• Yeah You Right (Levise) (6:42)

FAME Review: Mitch Ryder - Live at Rockpalast 1979 + 2004 (2-DVD set) or (3-CD box)

- Long Road Home (Foggy Nims) (3:17)
- War (Ryder / Levis) (8:28)
- Nice 'n' Easy (Ryder / Gabriel) (6:56)
- CC Rider/Jenny Take A Ride (Rainey / Arrant) / (Crewe / Johnson / Penniman) (4:13)
- Ain't Nobody White (Can Sing The Blues) (Ryder / Levis) (8:32)
- Devil With A Blue Dress On/Good Golly Miss Molly (Stevenson / Strong) / (Blackwell / Marascalo) (3:51)
- Liberty (Cropper / Wells / Levis)(5:15)
- Dance Ourselves To Death (Ryder / Levis / Gabriel) (9:04)
- Wicked Messenger (Bob Dylan) (3:30)
- Rock 'n' Roll (Lou Reed) (7:20)
- Tough Kid (Ryder / Levis) (5:39)
- True Love (Ryder / Levis) (7:07)
- Soul Kitchen (Morrison / Manzarek / Krieger / Densmore) (11:56)
- From A Buick 6 (Bob Dylan)(5:00)
- Everybody Loses (Levis) (5:05)
- True Love (Ryder / Levis) (7:33)
- The Porch (Levis) (3:47)
- Ain't Nobody White (Can Sing The Blues) (Ryder / Levis) (6:04)
- CC Rider/Jenny Take A Ride (Rainey / Arrant) / (Crewe / Johnson / Penniman) (4:19)
- Rock 'n' Roll (Lou Reed) (6:15)
- Freezin' In Hell (Ryder / Levis) (8:40)
- Subterranean Homesick Blues (Bob Dylan) (6:17)
- The Terrorist (Levis) (4:57)

CD 3 / DVD 2:

- Red Scar Eyes (Ryder / Levis) (11:42)
- Devil With A Blue Dress On / Good Golly Miss Molly (Stevenson / Strong) / (Blackwell / Marascalo) (4:30)
- Heart Of Stone (Jagger / Richards) (11:47)
- Gimme Shelter (Jagger / Richards) (13:35)
- It Wasn't Me (Levis) (6:38)
- Bass Intro / Little Wing (Jimi Hendrix) (2:30)
- Soul Kitchen (Morrison / Manzarek / Krieger / Densmore) (13:01)

Edited by: David N. Pyles
dnpyles@acousticmusic.com

Copyright 2012, [Peterborough Folk Music Society](#).

This review may be reprinted with prior permission and attribution.



[Return to FAME Reviews](#)

[Return to FAME Home Page](#)

Return to acousticmusic.com Home Page

Website design by David N. Pyles
DNPyles@acousticmusic.com
acousticmusic.com