

FFanzeen: Rock'n'Roll Attitude With Integrity

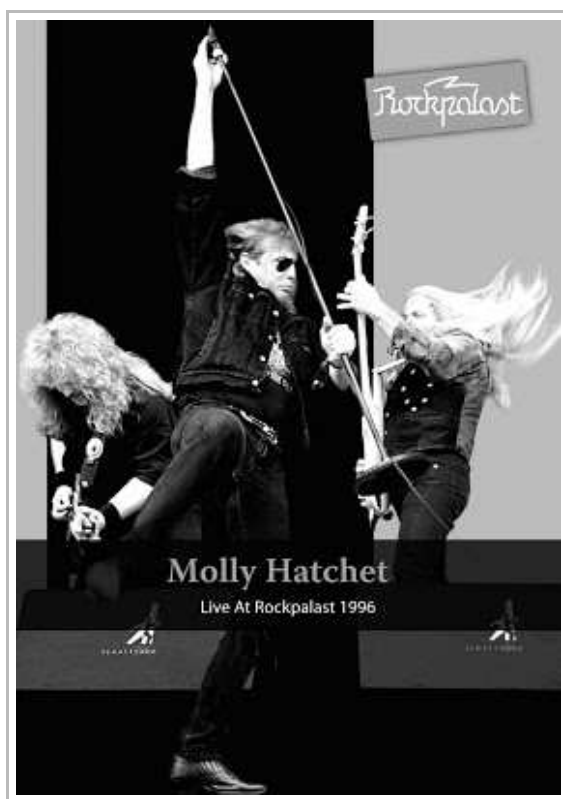
Through the writings and photography of Robert Barry Francos, a view of the arts and culture, including everyday life.

MONDAY, MARCH 25, 2013

DVD Review: Molly Hatchet, Live at Rockpalast 1996

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Images from the Internet



Molly Hatchet: Live at Rockpalast 1996

Directed by Gerd F. Schultze

MIG / WDR

71 minutes, 1996 / 2013

MIG-music.de

MVDvisual.com

Back in 1981, I visited a friend in Greensboro, NC, and had the opportunity to attend a show or two at the legendary Fridays club. One of the bands was copying the style of Talking Heads after they went mainstream. It was then that I learned of a Greensboro tradition: rather than shouting out the name of a band they would rather see, the audience chanted the name of one they considered to be equally bad. In tandem, they screamed in the local accent, "Mol-leh Hay-chet Mol-leh Hay-chet Mol-leh Hay-chet," until the band on stage left.

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About Me

Robert Barry Francos
 Currently living in Saskatoon (email at RBF55@msn.com for address). From 1977-88, I used to publish a print version of a music magazine in New York called FFanzeen, which dealt with the wide-ranging independent music scene. I also photographed many bands from the period (and since). Now I write this blog, and have a column at jerseybeat (dot) com (slash) quietcorner (dot) html. And the beat goes on.

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Now, I knew diddly about Hatchet, as southern rock is not one of my fortes. I'd rather listen to real blues, personally. As time went on, Hatchet never really crossed my musical bow, so outta sight outta mind, right? Well, as any long-term music reviewer knows, you never know where bands will turn up in your radar. In my case, the powers that be brought a live performance of Hatchet from the Rockpalast show on June 23, 1996, at the open-air Loreley stadium in Germany.

This was recorded soon after the addition of new vocalist Phil McCormack, who replaced long-time voxer Danny Joe Brown who left for health reasons. Since I wouldn't know Brown's work if I fell over it, I'll just talk about the 1996 freshly reminted edition. They are awful. Well, the band itself is typical and not much is really exciting, but it's McCormack who is, well, bad. Sure, he has a growl, but there is nothing noteworthy about his style. He isn't even too determined to worry about being on key, and could be just about anyone.

Lynyrd Skynyrd's Ronnie could fuckin' wail. Same with Jim Dandy of Black Oak Arkansas in his own way, but Phil doesn't really have much stage presence at all. This is quite evident when you compare his vocals on the Womacks' "It's All Over Now" to Mick and Keef's. The only thing outstanding about McCormack is his Rolling Stones jacket and his beer gut.

I always wonder about bands from the US, especially those from the Deep South, who gig abroad and then play songs that are strongly pro-American to a nationalistic level. I mean, yeah, they do a few bars of "Dixie," and there are quite a few people in the audience with Southern Cross flags (it makes me nervous especially in certain European countries). It feels weird to be, even with their then-new song, "Fall of the Peacemakers," about Vietnam vets. I mean, I can't really recall seeing too many bands come to North America and go on with a consistent "my country is better than yours" attitude. I keep thinking of Britain's Eater and "Thinkin' of the USA."

The songs here are okay, but nothing that's going to stick in my mind longer than writing this review, quite frankly. Now, they give good energy to Greg Allman's "Dreams I'll Never See," and it's obvious the band can play, centered on Bobby Ingram's lead guitar. There is even an interesting empty-handed drum solo by Mac Crawford. But overall, this was hardly what I would call electrifying. Yep, they hit their marks and play together nice into a neat package (especially the twin guitar-solos of Ingram and Bryan Bassett on the "Flirtin' With Disaster" finale), but their sound lacks hooks, even with the repetitious parts that are supposed to be them.

As a side-note, considering how hot the day was and being under the lights, nearly no one's hair seems to get slicked. I'm guessing some of these country boys are wearing wigs. Hey, it's not unknown in the rock world either, y'know.

If yer a Hay-e-cet fan, nuthin' I'm sayin' is going to be true. That's cool. Get down with some JD and enjoy 'em at your tailgate pawty, and I'm going to listen to somethin' else.

Band:

Phil McCormack: Vocals / harmonica

Bobby Ingram: Guitar

Bryan Bassett: Guitar

[Tom Bingham's blog](#)

[G-Mole: Bruce Farley Mowat](#)

[Suburban Voice: Al Quint](#)

[Blog of Lance Strate of General Semantics / Media Ecology Association](#)

[Who Really Cares blog of Craig Davison](#)

Andy McKinney: Bass
John Galvin: Keyboards
Mac Crawford: Drums
Leslie Hawkins / Therisa McCoy: Background vocals

Set List:

Bounty Hunter
It's All Over Now
Gator Country
Rolling Thunder
Devil's Canyon
Down from the Mountain
Whiskey Man
Dreams I'll Never See

Encore:

Fall of the Peacemakers
The Journey
Flirtin' with Disaster

Bonus videos: