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## Iggy & the Stooges – Raw Power Live: In the Hands of the Fans

### MVD Audio



This document of the reformed **Stooges'** performance at **All Tomorrow's Parties** on 3 September 2010, seemingly shows the band to have not lost any of their visceral belligerence in the 37 years since the release of their classic third album. The CD contains versions of all eight of *Raw Power's* songs (in a different order), together with lost single classic "I Gotta Right," all played tight and fast just like on the record, but minus the superfluous plinky-plonk piano and with an extra dose of, well... raw power.

This must surely be just like being present at one of those legendary gigs back in 1973. Well actually, from the evidence of the recently released *Georgia Peaches* CD and of course the notorious *Metallic KO*, to say nothing of the many bootlegs that have flooded the market over years, nothing could be further from the case. Recordings from the period reveal the live group to have been a very different beast to the concise unit heard on the record. On stage the group would loosen up, stretching time and space, **James Williamson** stripping his guitar right down to allow the late **Ron Asheton** to stretch out with some freeform bass over which **Iggy** would ad-lib, working the audience in his inimitable way. Far from being obliterated, pianist **Scott Thurston** came to the fore live, his bar-room boogie-woogie giving the band more of a sleazy **Stonesy** swagger in keeping with the seedy mid-west ballrooms the band were playing at the time. Songs would vary hugely from one night to the next, in a way that wouldn't be accepted by today's more 'professional' music business, certainly not at showcase events like ATP.

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*Raw Power Live: In the Hands of the Fans* then is a fascinating glimpse of an alternative past that never really was. It documents a parallel universe 1973 where gym workouts replaced class-A drugs and a careerist work ethic replaced getting wasted. The strange thing is, terrible as that prospect sounds, the proof here confounds all rock 'n' roll logic and a tight focused Stooges probably makes more sense in 2011 than the car crash group of old would. Certainly I miss the unpredictability, but it's compensated for by the headlong adrenaline rush that the reunited group serves up. With no piano and **Mike Watt's** propulsive punk rock bass replacing Asheton's more jazzy swing, this no-nonsense line-up certainly rocks. Truth is, the basic essence of the Stooges is powerful and primal enough to survive just about any kind of approach. I'm just happy to have them back in whatever form they choose and this album is a welcome addition to any Stooges fan's collection, particularly on lovely 180gsm vinyl.

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Iggy's own appraisal of these recordings is that "this shit really sizzles and we are so obviously a crack band in a class of our own." Who could possibly disagree?

-Alan Holmes-



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