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## The Jesus Lizard **Club** MVD Visual

I'll probably always regret not catching the Jesus Lizard on their reunion tour in 2009. Not because I never witnessed the band live during their heyday, but for precisely the opposite reason. Having seen the Jesus Lizard's hard-nosed grate of punk and noise during the band's prime, I knew far too well that these shows were not too be missed. Never for a minute did I think that the passing years would lessen the Jesus Lizard's ferocity, and by all reports, I was right.

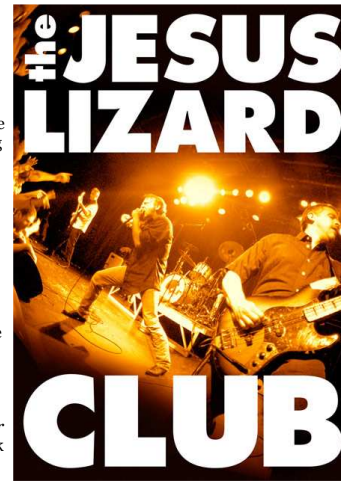
Adding further fire for my woe is *Club*, a new DVD containing video of the band's performance in Nashville on that last go-round. Recorded at the Exit/In, this was the Jesus Lizard's first performance on their reunion tour. That the band roars out of the gate like no time has passed since they last set foot on a stage together is yet even additional evidence that I missed out.

Indeed. After vocalist David Yow tells a joke about Michael Jackson and Farrah Fawcett, the band leaps into "Puss" from *Liar* and he climbs into the crowd. From there, it's one lacerating track after the next, with Yow increasingly drenched in sweat and spending half his time surfing atop the audience. Presented in real time, *Club* (no doubt so named since *Show* was already used) captures the unrestrained intensity of the Jesus Lizard in the flesh. On "Seasick," bassist David Wm. Sims and drummer Mac McNeilly underpin the song with a hammering rhythm. They do the same on "Gladiator," perhaps the highlight here, where guitarist Duane Dennison also lets loose with a barrage sharp riffs.

But Yow was always the focal point of the Jesus Lizard's melee, and he doesn't disappoint. While his vocals sound dry in the audio mix, it's not enough to detract from the performance, especially not when Yow's diving headfirst, 15 feet into the audience, though the other problem with this footage is the lack of proper lighting for when he is out in the crowd. For "Blockbuster," Yow gets literal, holding his member while singing, "Here I come with my dick in my hand," but for the most part he keeps his pants on. Otherwise, he's always one small step from becoming completely unhinged while goading the Southern audience to do the same by calling them rednecks and racists. He may have a gut now (at one point he comments on it by saying, "I'd like to see you when you're 48") and less hair on his head, but as captured here, he hasn't lost once ounce of the furor from his days of yore. Hell, by the end of the band's first set, the kids in the front row look more exhausted than Yow does.

After 56 minutes, the Jesus Lizard takes a short break and returns for another six songs. "Bloody Mary" is one of the more evocative moments, Yow's scream used to channel as much tragedy as rage. The show finishes with "Wheelchair Epidemic" and with, appropriately, the singer mostly out in the audience. It would be ridiculous to insinuate that *Club* is a good substitution for seeing the band live, but if you feel like rubbing salt in your wounds, you could do worse.

**Stephen Slaybaugh**



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