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## DVD review | The Jesus Lizard's 'Club'

Sept. 21

Ink

### The Jesus Lizard

#### "Club" (DVD)

They just don't make 'em like they used to.

Shot in Nashville at the beginning of The Jesus Lizard's brief 2009 reunion tour, "Club" is the only DVD documenting perhaps the tightest rock band of all time. The film proves that independent rock vets The Jesus Lizard still have it.

Featuring the band's classic lineup of David Yow, David Wm. Sims, Duane Denison and Mac McNeilly, the 22 tracks here represent only that lineup's body of work.

It is surprising that only a handful of tracks from the original lineup's later works — "Liar," "Down" and "Shot" — show up on "Club." But what we hear of those albums is ferocious here. And longtime fans should be pleased with the abundance of material from the band's first albums and EPs. While the band mostly shied away from covers in its heyday, it does a pretty mean Chrome medley mid-set.

Long known for onstage antics involving, ahem, acrobatics with moves like “The Hairy Tangerine” and “The Tight and Shiny,” frontman Yow mostly keeps it in his pants throughout the DVD. (His penis makes a brief and, mercifully, obscured appearance.) Otherwise, Yow is in amazing form for a guy who’s pushing 50. He fronts one of the most intense bands of all time and spends a good 60 percent of the set yowling and yelping from atop the crowd.

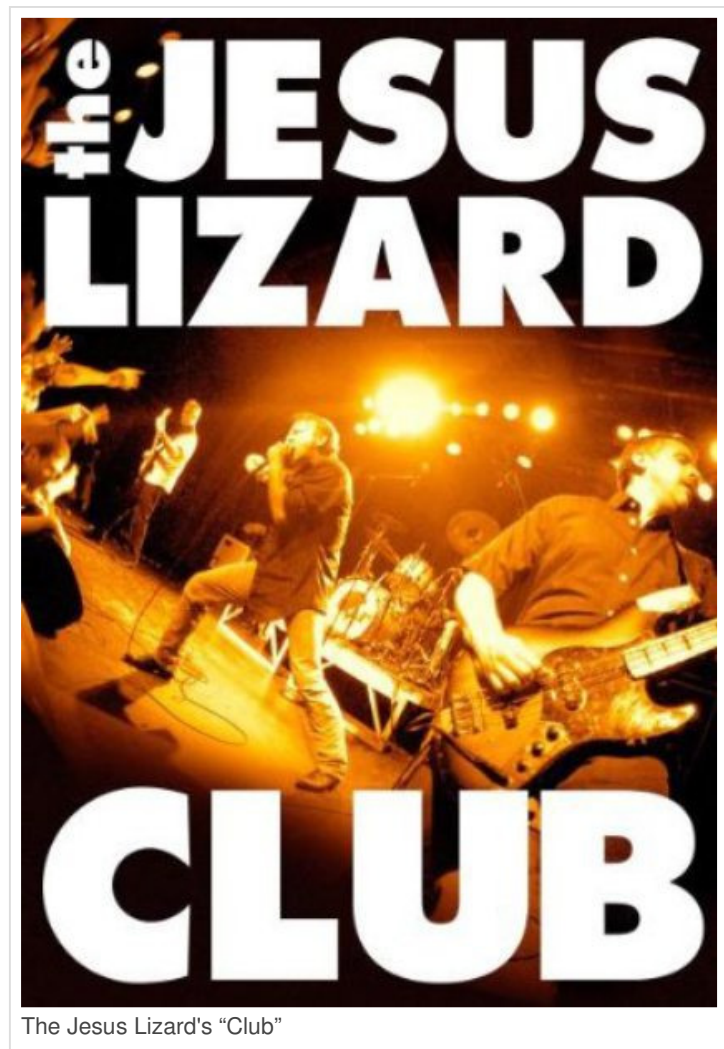
His bandmates keep up, unrelenting as ever. Guitarists will like the great shots of Duane Denison’s hands, a valuable tutorial in economy of motion with maximum sonic impact. Mac McNeilly is still a serious contender for best rock drummer ever. Bassist David Sims hasn’t lost an iota of the propulsive, menacing low end fans loved, even though he has lost the shagginess.

Nothing compares to seeing The Jesus Lizard live in its ’90s heyday. But “Club” is as good a document as fans are likely to get. The film is shot and edited as well any other live DVD — better than most. The sound is good, but longtime fans will notice that Denison’s guitar isn’t as loud as it should be and Yow’s vocals are higher in the mix than ever before.


During the solo of “Wheelchair Epidemic,” the set’s closer, Yow presses his vocal mic into Denison’s speaker cabinet. All of a sudden, it sounds like it’s supposed to, like the band’s Steve Albini-recorded early records.

Not that the DVD sound is bad. It’s just unusual for Yow’s vocals to be so loud, especially live, when lyrical intelligibility is often next to nil in favor of his frenetic, harrowing performance style. This set is no less enjoyable, but less representative of the band’s singular aesthetic, especially when compared to the 1994 live album, “Show.”

The DVD extras — mp3s of the set — make “Club” worth the price. They rectify much of the not-loud-enough guitar issue.



It appears that this may be the last we'll hear from The Jesus Lizard. "Club" shows that almost a decade after breaking up, they can still kick your band's ass. You'll love every sweaty minute of it.

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