

FFanzeen: Rock'n'Roll Attitude With Integrity

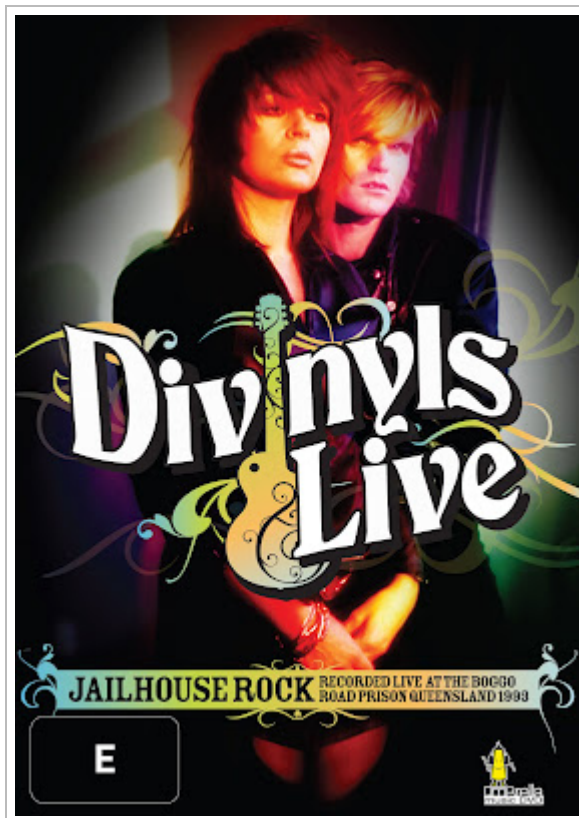
Through the writings and photography of Robert Barry Francos, a view of the arts and culture, including everyday life.

MONDAY, AUGUST 27, 2012

DVD Reviews: Divinyls / Rose Tattoo Live, Boggo Road Prison 1993

Text © Robert Barry Francos / FFanzeen Blog, 2012
Images from the Internet

I have put these two reviews together because they were recorded at the same show.



Divinyls: Jailhouse Rock, Recorded Live at the Boggo Road Prison, Queensland 1993

Directed by Chris Fitz-Gibbon

Umbrella Music

85 minutes, 1993 / 2012

Umbrellaent.com.au

MVDvisual.com

I can still remember the first time I heard / saw the Divinyls play on

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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

some television concert series, back in 1984. It was jaw-dropping.

Lead singer Christina Amphlett came onstage wearing the adult Catholic School Girl outfit equivalent to AC/DC guitarist Angus Young, but her character seemed to be a bit, well, *tetched*, as they may say in the southern US. The songs were hard, sharp, and earnest, as Christina roamed the stage, doing some odd dances and head shakes, writing on her own face with lipstick, and pouring a pitcher of water over her head. But more than the theatrics, there was an edge to the songs and her voice, a yearning and sharpness, whether it was the desperation of “Boys in Town” or the slow burn and build-up of one of my favorites of this period, the extended “Elsie.”

Then they soon had their hits Stateside, like “Pleasure and Pain” and especially “I Tough Myself,” turning Christina more into a Sheena Easton (“Sugar Walls” period). Another equivalent would be Slade’s anachronistic “My Oh My” from that same era.

Later, in 1993, an infamous prison closed back in Brisbane, Queensland, so what else to do but to put on a huge rock concert at the grounds?

When the Divinyls start their set, with their tremendous “Boys in Town,” I had a shock. Great, powerful song about moving on, and, well, while the band is in full tilt mode, Amphlett basically goes through the motions. What a difference in tone from when I saw that televised concert ten years earlier to this performance. “Crap,” I said, “I hope the whole show isn’t like *this*,” a limp version of greatest hits. Thankfully, I was wrong.

Even by their second song, “I’ll Make You Happy,” off my fave of their albums, *Desperation*, the tempo and emotion had come up substantially. The material they cover on the DVD encompasses their five albums to date, including “Open Windows,” “Sex Will Keep Us Together,” “Ain’t Gonna Eat Out My Heart Anymore,” and of course, “I Touch Myself” and “Strut”... I mean “Pleasure and Pain.”

Of course, the two songs that I would have loved to have heard, “Siren (Never Let You Go)” and the aforementioned “Elsie” were MIA. Still, I’m not complaining, because despite its limp start, the Divinyls prove to be made of hardier stuff, and they bring on their A- game. Sure, some of that early edge and brittleness is long worn down, but even at this level, the Divinyls were better than just about anything coming out of Down Under, such as the overrated Midnight Oil and Men at Work.

Yes, this DVD is worth getting, putting on, and enjoying it for the period piece that it certainly is, not to mention a more-than-decent repertoire. And then follow it up with *Desperate* and perhaps a cuppa.

Band:

Christina Amphlett: vocals

Lee Borkman: keyboards / guitar

Charlie Drayton: drums

have a column at [jerseybeat \(dot\) com \(slash\) quietcorner \(dot\) html](http://jerseybeat.com/quietcorner.html). And the beat goes on.

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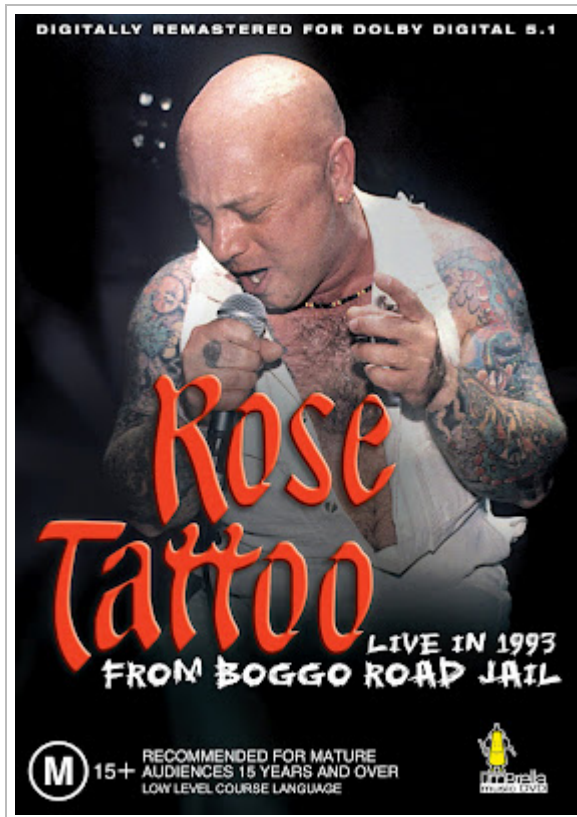
[Blog of Lance Strate of General Semantics / Media Ecology Association](#)

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

Mark McEntee: *guitar*
Jerome Smith: *bass*

Set List:

Boys in Town
I'll Make You Happy
Only Lovely
Guillotine Day
Need a Lover
Open Windows
Love School
Lay Your Body Down
Science Fiction
Temperamental
Sex Will Keep Us Together
Make Out Alright
Bless My Soul
I Touch Myself
Ain't Gonna Eat Out My Heart Anymore
Pleasure and Pain



Rose Tattoo: Live in 1993 From Boggo Road Jail

Directed by Chris Fitz-Gibbon

Umbrella Music

54 minutes, 1993 / 2012

Umbrellaent.com.au

MVDvisual.com

Rose Tattoo was known as the “Bad Boys of Australian rock” (hey, it says so right on the back of the DVD box). In a land that released the likes of AC/DC and the Saints, that’s saying something, I guess.