

Troost: DVD

So, apparently, these guys were like, "Let's have a bunch of bands play our virtually pitch-black basement! We'll call it a fest and then we'll put out a live DVD! We'll film two camera angles: well-lit drummer and very-dimly-lit everything else! It'll rule!" And that's exactly what did. And I watched it. One song from each band, almost an hour's worth of material. Regardless of the fact that the bands seem to have run the gamut of various styles within punk, which is to be applauded, well, it all still sounds like a tinny basement show that's been put out on DVD. I'm going to be generous and file it under "Guess you had to be there." Apart from folks who were in the basement at the time and want to try and see if they can discern a friend, colleague, or bandmate in the dimness, I don't think there's any reason why someone else would ever need to watch this. Features Grizzly J. Berry, Harsh Reality, Meat Mist, Dark Ages, Nature Boys, Battle Royale, Sneaky Creeps, White Slave, Baitfish, Texas Instruments, Regret, The Informer, No Master, Sucked Dry, Boreas, and Attention Seeker. -Keith Rosson (XO Press, 3922 Harrison Kansas City, MO)

What Did You Expect?: The Archers Of Loaf Live at Cat's Cradle: DVD

I'm a big Archers fan and was really looking forward to viewing *What Did You Expect?* This ninety-minute DVD is primarily live material from the band's reunion shows recorded over two consecutive nights in 2011 at Cat's Cradle in Chapel Hill, North Carolina. Although the band has since done tours together, this was their first time back on stage in over a decade.

The live performance is interspersed with interviews with band members, but they are brief, with topics including their atrocious band name and life on the road. It would have been interesting to hear more about the history of the band, what they had each been doing in the years between their break-up and reformation, and their thoughts on getting back together. Instead, we get talk about why they miss their old van. If the producers of the film weren't going to ask more than these uninteresting questions, it doesn't seem as though it's worth including the interview sections.

The interviews break up the main portion of the film, which is the

concert footage. Archers sound tight and bassist Matt Gentling definitely seems into it. He jumps and stomps around the stage and displays a lot of energy that matches the music. Although in an interview on the DVD he says a lot of it is nervous energy, it seems more like he's the only member of the band really excited to be there. Archers aren't a crazy punk band, but they do demand more of an expression of intensity than what the rest of the band seemed capable of. That's not to say the members looked bored, but let's just say it makes sense that the majority of the time the camera was focused on Gentling or at least his side of the stage. Otherwise you'd have ninety minutes of guys just standing (or sitting, in the case of the drummer) and playing catchy, and occasionally emotionally charged, indie rock songs on their instruments.

All of this goes back to my view that if you play punk or any variation of it, you should have energy and put on some sort of "performance" for your audience. That's not to say you have to dress up in costumes and create a set, but standing up on stage and playing the songs in the exact same way as they're heard on the album and barely talking to the crowd in between songs seems to be one of the worst things a band could do. Unfortunately, on *What Did You Expect?* Archers Of Loaf tend to do way more of the latter and nothing even close to the former.

I found it way more interesting to watch the fans in the front row, especially the girl who in her jumping I thought would jump out of her tank top, or the indie rock guy who was up front but could seem to care less about being there. All of that being said, it makes it hard to understand how the director could say, "...I truly believe [this] is one of the most exciting concert films of all time," besides the fact that he obviously believes in what he does and wants to sell copies of the DVD.

I still love the Archers Of Loaf and will listen to them regularly, but now know that should they go on tour and come to my city, I certainly have no reason to go see them. That's not just because I've seen them live on DVD, but because they don't seem to put on much of a live show. -Kurt Morris (whatdidyouexpectmovie.com)



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