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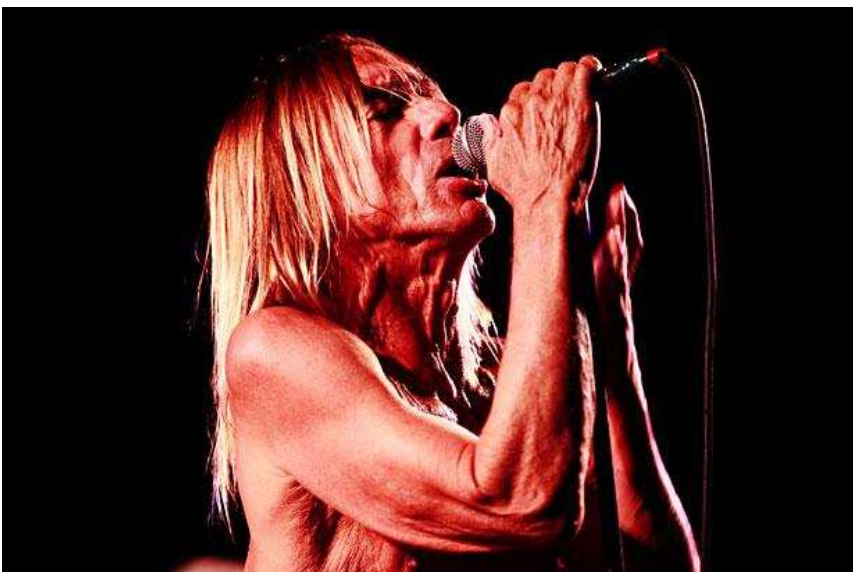
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Iggy Pop and the Stooges Rock Ron Asheton Tribute Concert

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By [Gary Graff](#) | April 20, 2011 2:05 PM EDT



[Ron Asheton](#) was not around to see the [Stooges](#) inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in 2010. But the group's late co-founder was saluted on Tuesday in his hometown of Ann Arbor, Mich., with what was, appropriately, the loudest wake you can imagine.

Organized by his sister, Kathy Asheton, and curated by [Iggy Pop](#), the two-and-a-half hour bash at the Michigan Theater mixed words and music -- but mostly music --

to pay tribute to Asheton, who died on Jan. 6, 2009, at the age of 60. It was a typical night of Stooges-style brutality but in an even more passionate form, as the group and its guests took a wide swing through the repertoire, clearly moved by the sense of occasion and the cacophonous spirit of the 1,700 fans who snapped up tickets for the concert in less than an hour.

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Following a spirited opening set by Space Age Toasties, a quartet from Ann Arbor's Neutral Zone teen center, and a slideshow accompanied by an orchestral overture of Stooges' songs -- "Some of his (Asheton's) themes always reminded me a lot of...classical music in the 17th century," Pop told Billboard.com prior to the show -- emcee [Henry Rollins](#) fronted the band for "I Got a Right" [Like](#) then came on to commence a full-on Stooges performance with co-founder and drummer Scott "Rock Action" Asheton, "Raw Power" guitarist James Williamson, longtime saxophonist Steve Mackay and Mike Watt, the group's bassist since 2003.

Shirtless and manic as always, even two days before his [Tweet](#) birthday, it didn't take Pop long to turn the theater to bedlam. Following pulverizing renditions of "Raw Power," "Search and Destroy" and "Gimme Danger," Pop brought dozens of fans on stage for "Shake Appeal," clearly reveling in the ecstatic anarchy of the moment. The rest of the night maintained the energy through favorites: 1 as "Beyond the Law," "1970" and "Fun House," the "ballad" "Open Up and Bleed" and a rendition of "I Wanna Be Your Dog" beefed up by an 11-piece orchestra.

The ensemble stayed on stage as [Radio Birdman](#)'s Deniz Tek, a longtime Asheton friend, spelled Williamson for "T.V. Eye," "Loose," "Dirt" and "Real Good Time," while Williamson returned for a new acoustic composition called "Ron's Tune," in which Pop sang that "the music says you'll be my friend to the end" and "because you were my friend, I always think of you again." The night finished with everyone, including more audience members, onstage for "No Fun" -- whose title, of course, was the antithesis of the experience.

[Stooges Bassist, Former Minuteman Mike Watt Makes 30-Song Rock Opera](#)

The speeches were relatively short but no less a part of the night. Scott Asheton thanked Pop for helping his brother "make his rock 'n' roll dreams come true -- and that goes for the drummer, too." Rollins delivered an ebullient dissertation explaining both the Stooges' impact and Ron Asheton's importance as "just a magnificent musician, period." The founding group members received keys to the city, and before "Ron's Tune" Pop spoke warmly about his absent friend, noting that, "He had a gift, a sort of charm. His compositions were simple but very memorable," and recalling that, "when I wanted to start a band, Ron was the first guy who would get behind me."

The concert was a lunch of sorts for the Ron Asheton Foundation formed by his sister to help raise money for charitable causes, particularly music and animal rights and care organizations. Information can be found at [ronashetonfoundation.org](#).

Here is the setlist for the Ron Asheton tribute show:

"Overture"

"I Got a Right" (with Henry Rollins)

"Raw Power"

"Search and Destroy"

"Gimme Danger"

"Shake Appeal"

"1970"

"L.A. Blues"

"Beyond the Law"

"Fun House"

"Open Up and Bleed"

"Your Pretty Face is Going to Hell"

"I Wanna Be Your Dog" (with orchestra)

"T.V. Eye" (with Deniz Tek and orchestra)

"Loose" (with Tek and orchestra)

"Dirt" (with Tek and orchestra)

"Real Cool Time" (with Tek and Orchestra)

"Ron's Tune" (Iggy Pop and James Williamson acoustic)

"No Fun" (with Tek, orchestra and Space Age Toasties)

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