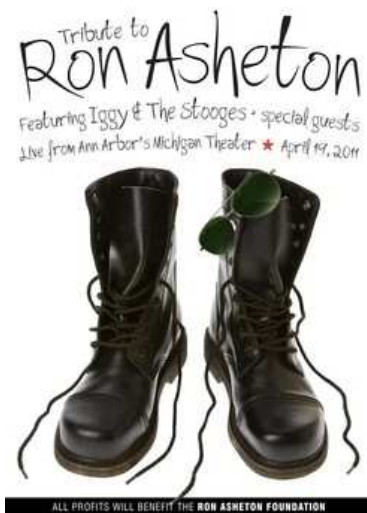


The Stooges' Ron Asheton saluted on DVD concert

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When Kathleen Asheton wrote Henry Rollins in 2009 asking if he'd emcee a tribute concert for her recently departed brother, the former Black Flag vocalist didn't flinch.

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"I agreed with trepidation," explains hard rock's Renaissance man. "But without hesitation."

For while Ron Asheton is widely known as the guitarist (and bassist) who's "outsider blues" charged seminal Stooges albums like *Fun House* and *Raw Power* in the early '70s, paving the way for punk and alternative rock, to Kathy he was a brother. And Rollins didn't want to muck things up.

The crew-cut singer explains his jittery nerves during his poignant memorial for Ashe new DVD *Ron Asheton: The Tribute Concert With Iggy & The Stooges* and Special Guests. Rollins describes Ron as a creative soul who performed music of "total oblivionated insanity" for "people who were kicked to the curb." Elsewhere during his 15-minute Stooges intro, Rollins shares memories of being exposed to The Stooges by Greg Ginn ("You need to know about this music"), and—in turn—introducing a teenage Sri Lankan boy to *Raw Power* on one of his own talking tours decades later: The album was "a rock Molotov cocktail."

Rollins thanks the 1,700 in attendance, who bought up all the tickets for the event within an hour, for coming out to "set things right" with him and The Stooges by acknowledging Ron's musical contributions.

Asheton succumbed to an apparent heart attack during the final hours of 2008. It wasn't until April 2011 that his peers were able to convene and pay homage to their fallen comrade. Directed by noted filmmaker and music documentarian Jim Jarmusch, *Ron Asheton: The Tribute* brings a reunited Stooges home to Ann Arbor's Michigan Theater for an evening of the reckless roots rock Asheton helped make famous.

Flanked by longtime Stooges guitarist James Williamson and bassist Mike Watt (minutemen, FIREHOSE) and backed by Scott Asheton on drums, a shirtless [iggy pop](http://www.examiner.com/topic/iggy-pop) shakes, shimmies, and whirls through nearly twenty classic Stooges cuts with the same feral energy he displayed when singing them live for the first time years ago.

Rollins guests on "I Got a Right," then defers to Pop, who leads the band through "Raw Power," "Search and Destroy," and "Gimme Danger" before inviting hundreds of fans onstage to gyrate with him on "Shake Appeal."

"I promised I wasn't gonna do this, because we're in a nice theater on a serious occasion," he says. "But come on up and dance with The Stooges!"

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Jarmusch's strategically placed cameras capture the action as the stage literally bounces beneath the weight in protest and Pop struggles to keep himself front and center amidst the throng. Bouncers then hurriedly clear the floor, giving Iggy room to breathe (and move) again for "1970" and "L.A. Blues." Watt—bearded and sporting a brace on his left knee—thrusts his custom red Michael "anchor bass" on "Night Theme" as Williamson coaxes ethereal tones from a silverburst Gibson Les Paul and a baseball-capped Asheton smacks his snare. Throughout, perpetual Stooges sideman Steve Mackay thickens the mix with saxophone and keyboards.

Iggy repeatedly yanks his microphone from its stand, only to ask technicians to upright the stand—so he can topple or hurl it away again—and baptizes concertgoers down front with his water bottles. The sweaty, sinewy singer collapses and crawls but always regains his footing, displaying the physicality of someone half his age on "Your Pretty Face (Is Going to Hell)." Later, Iggy dives into the crowd and is collected by his handler, but—like a stubborn kid who refuses to quit the playground—leaps back into the audience and body-surfs over their heads without missing a verse.

View the DVD trailer here: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1HoYsFD2wDw&feature=player_embedded (http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1HoYsFD2wDw&feature=player_embedded)

Williamson dials up an unplugged sound on "Open Up and Bleed," strumming as Iggy writhes and Mackaye huffs on harmonica. Radio Birdman guitarist Deniz Tek wields a white Stratocaster on "Loose," giving Williamson a five-minute respite. A string section joins The Stooges for "I Wanna Be Your Dog," whose airy midsection finds the sold-out crowd singing to Williamson's crunchy chords.

"He had a gift, a charm," Iggy eulogizes Asheton later on. "His compositions were always simple—but memorable. Now he's trying to fly ashes on my head from heaven."

Williamson accompanies Pop with an acoustic slide guitar on his lap for "Ron's Tune," then straps his Les Paul on again for the climactic "No Fun," which finds Iggy out in the audience again.

Bonus features include an extended interview with Rollins and the night's opening set by Radio Birdman. We're treated to backstage footage and watch crew load-in The Stooges equipment as snow (in April!) wafts gently outside the venue. Jarmusch discusses putting the project together to "celebrate Ron and what he gave us" and drummer Chris Wujek reminisces about meeting Asheton during some quieter moments at soundcheck the evening before the show.

"It's not about just his musical legacy, but what he left as a human being," insists Tek.

"He had the most positive spirit...no matter how hard things were going. He was an enlightened person."

All proceeds from the sale of the DVD go to The Ron Asheton Foundation, which supports animal welfare and music education.

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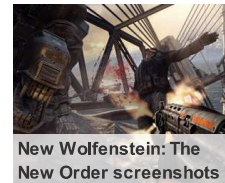
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