

A Tribute to Ron Asheton

If the name, Ron Asheton, doesn't ring a bell, it means that your knowledge of Iggy and the Stooges is either non-existent or limited to the snippet from "Lust for Life" in commercials for Royal Caribbean cruise lines. That's OK ... rock trivia may not be your game. Asheton, who died in 2009, at 60, was a founding member of the Stooges. He played guitar and bass, off and on, for the next 40 years, in groups of his own or at Stooges reunions. Not that lists matter for much in the rock 'n' roll universe, but, for the record, Asheton was ranked 60th among the 100 greatest guitar players of all time. "A Tribute to Ron Asheton" was shot and recorded in April, 2011, at Ann Arbor's Michigan Theater. It's a terrific performance, typical of the Stooges' contributions to the rock dodge, ever since they and the MC-5 practically invented Punk. Although he's 106 years old now, Iggy doesn't look, sound or act a day over 26 – split the difference for the correct number – as he prances and crawls around the stage, shirtless, or dives into the audience. Before the concert kicks off, Henry Rollins offers a long, rambling tribute to Asheton, which, while heartfelt, reminds us that talking about rock 'n' roll robs the music of its soul. The band performs several of its biggest hits, as well as some lesser-known ditties. A string section, no less, even accompanies the Stooges for a few songs. All profits from the sale of the DVD go to the Ron Asheton Foundation, which supports animal welfare and music. - Gary Dretzka

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