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Europe

Live at Sweden Rock

Review by G. W. Hill

I reviewed the DVD of this in the last issue of Music Street Journal. That covered more the overall performance and sound quality and such. This one focuses more on the individual songs. I have to say that, while I generally disregarded this act in the past, this video and audio combination has changed my mind about them. I look forward to more from these guys in the future.



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Track by Track Review

Disc 1

Riches to Rags

There is a short tentative introduction. Then they fire out into a killer riff-driven jam. This is metal meets real rock and roll groove. It's a killer tune, too.

Firebox

A bit more anthemic, the powerhouse riff that drives this is still quite energized. At times this makes me think of Dream Theater just a bit. There's a drop back to a psychedelia meets progressive rock mellow movement mid-track, too.

Not Supposed To Sing the Blues

There is definitely a lot of progressive metal built into this. Yet the vocal performance is pretty purely soulful and very awesome. As good as the two openers were, this seems to up the ante even more. That really says a lot. Parts of this make me think of Blackmore's Rainbow and the mellower drop back later calls to mind Deep Purple to me in a lot of ways.

Scream of Anger

The riff that drives this makes me think of Iron Maiden quite a bit. This is a powerhouse number that's very much a power metal cut. It's (appropriately) a real screamer. Imagine combining Helloween with *Burn* era Deep Purple. That would probably sound a lot like this. It has some killer melodic guitar soloing, too.

Superstitious

There is definitely a classic rock vibe to this. Deep Purple is a good reference point. Anthemic metal is another. This is more of a power ballad in some ways, but it rocks a bit more than that would indicate. An audience singalong section brings a real soulful vibe to the piece.

No Stone Unturned

A cool proggy keyboard solo opens this. From there the cut starts out tentatively as another hard rocking piece. As the arrangement fills out it takes on a real epic metal vibe. The vocals are powerful and there are symphonic elements in the mix.

New Love in Town

I like this a lot. It's definitely a mainstream rocker that fits under the "power ballad" heading. There are a lot of symphonic elements here. The vocal performance and hooks are top-notch and the whole thing is just very accessible and powerful.

In The Future To Come

Fast paced technical metal with great hooks is the order of business here. Comparisons to Helloween are very well-deserved on this. It's a real screamer. It's one of my favorites of the whole set.

Paradize Bay

There are some great guitar melodies on this metallic beast. It's a real stomper and another of my favorites here.

Girl from Lebanon

Another power metal tune, this is a real screamer, too. It's another smoking hot tune on a disc that's full of them.

Prisoners in Paradise

This is first real ballad here. Mind you, it's still a power ballad. It's a great tune and a nice change of pace. The piano work is great and the vocal performance really grabs the listener. The melodic guitar solo is a tasteful and tasty, too.



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Always the Pretenders

There's a short mellow introduction, but then they fire out with one of the hardest rocking sounds of the whole disc. This is another killer powerhouse metal tune with accessible hooks.

Drink and a Smile

Although this is an acoustic guitar based tune, I wouldn't call it a ballad. It's got a bluesy rocking sound to it. It's another killer piece and another that brings some variety to the table. The vocal performance is especially effective and I love the acoustic guitar soloing.

Open Your Heart

Another that's acoustic based, this one is definitely more of a ballad. Still, it gets some rocking impetus later in the song. It's another that's quite compelling and effective.

Love Is Not the Enemy

Here we get a smoking hot metal tune with a lot of fire and fury along with a lot of melody built into it.

Sign of the Times

Keyboards start this one and it grows out into another stomper from there. This is accessible and powerful and a great tune.

Disc 2

Start from the Dark

With both mellower and harder rocking sections, this is another tune that fits well into a power metal sound.

Wings of Tomorrow

A stomping hard rocker, this is quite a tasty one.

Carrie

Keyboards start this one. It's a ballad that's quite pretty and powerful.

Jailbreak (special guest Scott Gorham) –

They cover a Thin Lizzy song and bring a member of Thin Lizzy out to help them with it. This is a great rendition.

Seven Doors Hotel

After a keyboard introduction, they fire out into a killer metal jam with a lot of UFO in the mix.

Drum Solo

There are some weird little clips at the start of this leading into the "William Tell Overture." That serves as the impetus for this powerhouse drum showcase. I'm not usually a fan of drum solos, but this one is fun because of that music in the mix.

The Beast

Some weird atmospheric sounds with world music in the mix opens this thing. The first real vocals come in over a keyboard backdrop, again bringing Deep Purple to mind. Then they fire out in a screaming hot metal jam. There is a mellower, more melodic drop back mid-track.

Let the Good Times Rock

I love this piece. It's got a great hard rocking groove and some killer melodies and hooks. This is not the hardest rocking thing here, but it's one of my favorite tracks of the album.

Lights Out (guest Michael Schenker)

They cover UFO here and bring Michael Schenker on-stage for it. This is a real screaming hot rendition.

Rock the Night

This one really does feel a lot like UFO or Scorpions, too. It's a cool rocker with a bit of an audience sing along section in the middle of it.

Last Look at Eden

There is a really symphonic opening section. That gives way to a powerhouse symphonic metal jam.

Final Countdown

The show is closed out with the big hit from the band. I was never a big fan of this song, but I've always liked the keyboard melody that starts it. This rocks out harder than I remember the tune rocking before. I'm still not a huge fan of this one, though.



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