

## TRADEMARK OF QUALITY

THE REV. KEITH A. GORDON STUMBLES MINDLESSLY THROUGH THE SORDID FLOTSAM AND JETSAM OF ALTERNATIVE CULTURE TO FIND SUBJECTS TO WRITE ABOUT THAT POSSESS THE ELUSIVE "TRADEMARK OF QUALITY." MP3 FILES ARE POSTED HERE STRICTLY FOR THE PURPOSE OF MUSIC CRITICISM AND THEREFORE FALL UNDER THE "FAIR USE" GUIDELINES OF U.S. COPYRIGHT LAW.

### **Punk Rock**

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SUNDAY, MARCH 30, 2008

### The Mooney Suzuki live at CBGB!

Well kiddies, that whole garage rock thing from the early-00s seems to be just about dead-and-buried, so perhaps it's time to let go of its stinkin' corpse and pronounce T-O-D, already. Just sayin'...hell, **the White Stripes** are the only band with legs

to survive the glut, and they were always more than a mere two-cars-and-a-toolbox, anyway. More like an ever-evolving force o' nature, that Jack White. Sure, the Raveonettes are still kickin' it, and maybe one or two others, but crank-spankers like the Vines, the Hives, Jet and their assorted drinkin' buddies have all either dropped below the radar or imploded in the face of the next new impending label-driven trend (which I'm guessin' will be electro-polka).

For my money – which is Canadian by the way, this close to the border (better exchange rate these days) – NYC's fabulous homegrown buzzsaws **the Mooney Suzuki** were among the cream-o-the-crop when it came to this three-chords-anna-roof garagey thing. Sure, they weren't Sky Saxon & the Seeds (but



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history of music in the rock, punk, metal, progressive and blues genres, along with samples in mp3 format. Music files are posted for a brief time and then the links will be removed. If you are an artist or label and you want your music sampled by thousands of curious readers, send your CDs, press kits and other booty to **Conspiracy M.E.D.I.A, 35 Montclair Avenue, Batavia NY 14020.**

We make no promises about reviewing your material.

We are not above writing about a number of other subjects on TMQ, from books, comics and toys to DVDs, electronic gadgets, computer equipment and musical gear. If you have some item that you'd like the Reverend to write about, contact TMQ at the email address below. You can also write us to remove a link if you feel that we've infringed upon your "intellectual property." Hey, we're all just trying to get along here.

then again, *who is?*) but they knew their way around a beat like nobody since Moulty, and they could tell the difference between a fuzztone and shinola. Besides, listening to their high-octane blend of Chuck Berry and the Rolling Stones, the MC5 and the British Invasion (the first one, with the Kinks and the Who, fool), you just knew that they had a bitchin' record collection.

The band had already been knockin' around the Big Apple for a few years before they recorded ***People Get Ready*** for Estrus Records in 2000, and they followed it up a couple years later with the mondo-giant, grunt-rock classic ***Electric Sweat*** for local NYC indie Gammon. These two pulsating slabs o' hot wax is what earned the Mooney Suzuki a big league deal, and Columbia Records thought that they had them a bona fide garage rock goldmine ready for plunder. Sadly, since major labels run on stupid and move at the speed of slug, by the time that the band's ***Alive & Amplified*** hit the shelves in '04, the garage trend had peaked and hipsters were jumping ship like politicians fleeing a scandal.

Rescued from the CBGB tape vault, ***Live June 29, 2001 – The Bowery Collection*** is a dynamite live collection of slash-n-burn rockers from the Mooney Suzuki. Recorded on the famed CBGB stage a couple of months before the release of ***Electric Sweat***, this album's tracklist is split around 60%-40% between the upcoming album and ***People Get Ready***...which is a fine thing, to be sure. This is the Mooney Suzuki at their rippin', snortin', turf-stompin' best.

The Mooney Suzuki start their set with the rumbling instrumental "It's Showtime Pt.1," which is part-Stax raver and part-MC5 kickin' out the jams on the Detroit tip. It quickly melds into the fantastic Yardbirds-influenced "In A Young Man's Mind," but with more feedback and cacophony than the British legends could muster...more like the Sonic Rendezvous Band, really. Sammy James is singing, "in a young man's mind, it's a simple world, there's a little room for music, and the rest is girls" while the band smashes bricks or something behind him, probably with greasy axes and a ten-pound sledge.

The rest of ***Live June 29, 2001 – The Bowery Collection*** kind of by roars past you, like the muzzle-flash from a semi-auto blowin' by at 3200fps a little *too close* to your noggin.

While you're online, why don't you click the link and visit the Reverend's **That Devil Music Storefront** and maybe buy something, eh?

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ROCK TALK



**ROCK TALK** is a collection of interviews taken directly from the Reverend's private stash, including several previously unpublished works, vintage photos and a select

"Everything's Gone Wrong" starts with a nuclear blast before spiraling into a runaway blitzkrieg of soulful vocals, screaming guitars and good old-fashioned landmine drumbeats. "Oh Sweet Susanna" is as close to a blues song as the Mooney Suzuki is going to ever get, with a few slurred lyrics and a couple o' nifty licks. It's a safe bet, tho', that no Delta musician on either side of the grave would recognize the critter. The sound and fury of "A Little Bit Of Love" woulda, coulda, shoulda been a monster radio hit if the band's label had half an iota of sense. Sheer British Invasion vibe with cool vocal harmonies and a ramshackle chorus, I imagine that this tasty lil' sucker would add a couple of hundred horsepower to your car's engine any time it came on the radio.

Mastered from tapes long squirreled away by CBGB founder Hilly Kristal, the sound on *Live June 29, 2001 – The Bowery Collection* is not as pristine as a digitally-gelded studio creation. The performances are a little noisy, clanking and clanging a bit here and there as the band teeters on the edge of chaos. There's a slight echo in the room and, at times, bass-heavy muddiness threatens to swallow the vocals.

But this isn't a low-budget bootleg, nosirree...it sounds just fine with the volume inched up a bit more than usual, and the production is as good as you're going to get from a soundboard tape recorded in a dive as dank and sound-hostile as the shotgun edifice of CBGB was. In short, *Live June 29, 2001 – The Bowery Collection* sounds as close as you're ever gonna get to actually standing in front of the stage, being anointed by the Mooney Suzuki's holy electric sweat.

Bottom line – this is a great live document of a band that could have been a contender instead of just another footnote in that big book o' rock & roll. If you don't like *this* stuff, then you've either been sippin' your granny's vitamin tonic or else you've assumed room temperature. Either way, it don't matter, 'cause the Rev says, "check it out!" ([CBGB Masters](#) / [MVD Audio](#))

(Click on the CD cover to buy *Live June 29, 2001* from Amazon.com)

### MP3s:

[The Mooney Suzuki - "A Little Bit Of Love"](#)

[The Mooney Suzuki - "In A Young Man's Mind"](#)

discography for each artist.

Paperback, 6"x9" 116-pages, black & white, \$11.00 postpaid. Click on the book cover to buy your copy of **ROCK TALK** from Amazon.com or use the PayPal button below to buy directly from the publisher and receive an autographed copy!

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POSTED BY REV. KEITH A. GORDON AT 11:26 AM 

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