



- Left of the Dial Magazine

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### [Living Colour/Live at CBGBs: The Bowery Collection MVD Audio](#)

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Although the Bad Brains are endowed with a heavy duty hardcore legacy that none dare question, and Fishbone is heralded for their ongoing contributions to ska-punk-metal-pop gumbo, Living Colour is often shrugged off by white hipsters for being too mainstream pop-metallica, which is a shame, because as this 'live in the heart of the Bowery' disc proves, these lords of tight and adept rhythm, soaring vocals, and mind-warping fretwork are much more than yesterday's holdovers. Sure, "Glamour Boys" does have urban FM radio appeal, as do their hits like "Cult of Personality," but Living Colour also embody much darker shades of real politick, such as their angry blend of agitprop and disgust on "Terrorism," which indicts both George Bush and Tony Blairs as puppet masters in the terrorist mold. Their opus "Open Letter to Landlord" loses none of its passion and sincerity here, and yields to spoken word explosivity in this version, evoking the ghost-to-be CBGBs tribulations on the spot. Stretched to over ten-minutes, it's an unyielding song of Biblical proportions. Most of this album revisits their Vivid period, like "Funny Vibe," with its unflinching look at the psychology of racism in everyday America: "No, I'm not going to rape you... why are you giving me that funny vibe?". Some 1990s tracks like "Ignorance is Bliss" (from Stain) do round off the selections. The live recording is rich, honest, and rumbling, placing you right in front of the smackdown PA, letting your ears ring with the power and the glory. If you thought they were too slick for punk, and too polished and funky for metal, think again. This dexterous and haunting (tune into "In Your Name") document will likely make you reevaluate their place in the pantheon.

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