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LIVING COLOUR / CGGB MASTERS

The Bowery Collection - Live, August 19, 2005

Review By Joe Milliken

CBGB Masters and MVD Audio release the next installment of the "Bowery Collection" with Living Colour, recorded live at the famed New York club in August of 2005, which makes it a reunion of sorts. Quite frankly, it is a shame that Living Colour is mostly remembered for their smash hit "Cult Of Personality", because indeed this New York City outfit was much more to that.

During their hey day of the late 1980's and early 90's, this band was capable of fusing several genres of music into 'one song', and would simply rip the joint up playing live. Singer Corey Glover's flying braids and guttural vocals, Vernon Reid's technically masterful yet shredding guitar prowess and a full-blown, right-on rhythm section capable of blowing the roof off the sucka! But what really set this band apart was their live sets full of improvisational jamming in which they twist their songs around a bit to create different vibes. Which of course is the case right from the opening speed of "Typed", in which Glover recites the lyrics of the song rather than sing them.

The band then proceeds to rifle through several Colour classics such as "Funny Vibe" "Middle Man" and "Glamour Boys", combining all the trademark Living Color sound that made their debut release "Vivid" such a masterpiece; metal, rock, jazz, raggae, samples, funk and punk - all shot through a cannon of electric fury and distinctive vibes. And of course to round it all out, the bring-the-house-down, foundation-shaking "Cult Of Personality" has to be one of the ballsiest show closing numbers of all time.

Although Living Colour only released four full-length CDs in their history, they have left a blistering imprint on the punk, metal and funk scenes over the last 20 years, which of course comes full circle with this CBGB release, which is recorded back where it really all began for Living Colour.