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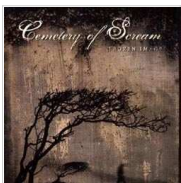
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REVIEWS

## MAGENTA

**LIVING COLOUR - CBGB OMFUG MASTERS: AUGUST 19, 2005 THE BOWERY COL**  
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**Metal Express Rating: 8.0/10**

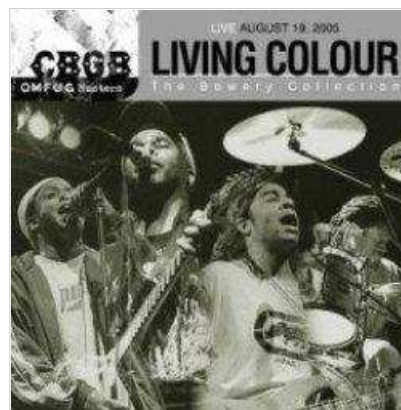
Release Date: 2008-10-28

by: GEORGE FUSTOS

Email:

george(at)metalexpressradio(dot)com

There is a major difference when it comes to studio albums and live recordings. This point cannot be proven any further than in this case – the release of Living Colour's *The Bowery Collection* recorded live at CBGB's in New York City back on August 19, 2005. CBGB's has been a landmark for



Underground Rock since December 1973, when it opened. This famous institution has since closed its doors (October 2006). This recording should be a special treat for Living Colour fans since the recording came directly from the soundboard.

Living Colour is a Funk Metal band that comes from New York City. They formed in 1983 and broke through finally in 1988 with their debut album titled *Vivid*. They gained tremendous exposure from their Grammy winning song "Cult of Personality." Their success came in part from their unique ability to mix together Heavy Metal, Hard Rock, Funk, Jazz, Punk, and Hip Hop and to incorporate into their lyrics the Eurocentrism and racism of America. Unfortunately when a group of talented individuals (in this case musicians) are together as a group for an extended period of time, creative differences usually knock heads and something unpleasant or non-productive rears its ugly head. In this case it was the unfortunate break-up of the band that occurred January 1995. All was not lost however because several of the band members decided to continue with a variety of solo work.

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Living Colour consists of founding member and guitarist Vernon Reid, vocalist Corey Glover, bassist Muzz Skillings, and Berklee College of Music graduate w/honors drummer Will Calhoun. Skillings left the band in 1992, a few years before they broke up and was replaced by Doug Wimbish.

Die hard fans of Living Colour must have made the gods happy for whatever reason because in December 2000 the band reformed by doing a secretive gig at CBGB's out of all places. The reunion was followed by the band's fourth album *Collideoscope* in 2003. The band has been together ever since and is currently writing and recording songs for their new album *Chair in the Doorway*, on track to be released in early 2009. Since their break-up in 2000 there have been three live releases, one of which is of the album being reviewed here. Living Colour is a band that does well in a studio surrounding but takes it to another level in a live setting.

The album has twelve songs on it coming in at just under 79 minutes. There is no lack of vocalist Corey Glover communicating with the audience. Once this is eliminated from the musical aspect of the CD/album, the minutes fall quickly to under an hour of actual music. This is one of the few negatives that befall the album. There are times when Corey goes on and on a bit too much. Communicating with the audience is a key factor in today's music and especially with live performances, but there must be some limit put on this facet of the communicating with the audience-to-music ratio.

The opening song "Type" is a killer tune. The music is just so powerful that it smacks you right in the face from the start. It is off their second album *Time's Up* and was their highest charting single. The next two tracks are off of their first and most popular album by far *Vivid*. "Middle Man" and "Funny Vibe" let it all hang out. Vernon Reid's guitar work is nothing short of spectacular and Corey Glover's voice is amazing, especially on these two tracks. While Vernon and Corey are busy doing their own thing on stage, Will Calhoun and by this time bassist Doug Wimbish, are keeping things in check with an awesome rhythm section. Listening to the bass part on "Funny Vibe" shouldn't be passed up by any means. Next are a couple of tunes off of the bands fourth and last studio album to date, *Collideoscope*. "In Your Name" and "Sacred Ground" are less known and not as popular as some of the bands earlier material. With "Sacred Ground" the band does an extremely extended version coming in at about twelve and a half minutes of music and finally ending at around fourteen minutes total-a little bit longer than the original four minute track.

"Open Letter to a Landlord" is another well known song off of *Vivid*. A classic tune in itself with some good bass runs and has only one knock against the live version here. Reiterating once again, too much communication going on and not enough music. That's only an

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observation that can be positive or negative depending which way you look at it. This is a live recording after all so that kind of give-and-take is to be expected but one would think not to the extent that Corey takes things. It takes about four and a half minutes before the music kicks in. Then at the eight minute mark, Corey gets the audience singing and joining in turning the song into a ten and a half minute track just about doubling the song's original length. The next tune "Terrorism" is very political in nature and self-explanatory by the title alone. "Glamour Boys" (off of *Vivid*) follows and gets the audience back into a happy, partying mood with its Funky, Reggae sound. "Ignorance Is Bliss" is up next and coming from their third album *Stain*. It sounds a bit like "Middle Man" in a few spots but then takes on its own original sound. It has a pretty good rockin' beat that is quite likeable.

The next two tracks, "Love Rears Its Ugly Head" and "Times Up" come off of the second album, *Time's Up*. "Times Up" is a song that seems a bit rushed for some reason. It moves along nicely and then all of a sudden goes into hyperdrive without any rhyme or reason. The arrangement of this song leaves many questions unanswered. The closing track is their most famous song, "Cult of Personality." There isn't anything that needs to be said about this song except that it Rocks!

For more band info check out:

Band's Blog & Info Site: [www.LivingColourMusic.com](http://www.LivingColourMusic.com)

Myspace Site: [www.MySpace.com/LivingColourMusic](http://www.MySpace.com/LivingColourMusic)

## USER COMMENTS

Posted by Scott/MER on 10/03/2009 21:59:36

George, I agree with your analysis on the audience communication... it's the reason some of those classic (song) live tracks weren't put onto radio rotation at the station here :-)

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see all ...

see classic only

see live only