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REVIEW

Music DVD Review: *Turned Up And Turned On*, The Original Country Joe Band

Written by [T. Michael Testi](#)
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Turned Up And Turned On was recorded on June 13, 2004 at the South Parade Pier, Southsea UK by Country Joe McDonald and The Original Country Joe Band which is effectively the latest incarnation of Country Joe and the Fish.

Country Joe and the Fish were founded in the San Francisco area in 1965-66 as a political device; partially of necessity, and partially for entertainment when the Free Speech Movement was organizing a series of demonstrations on the Berkeley campus against the war in Vietnam. Joe McDonald had been editing a magazine called *Rag Baby* and supposedly ran out of material. He decided to do a "talking" issue of the magazine and had an EP pressed with four songs, two of which were "I-Feel-Like-I'm-Fixin'-to-Die Rag" and a satire of President Lyndon Johnson called "Superbird".

The political aspect of Country Joe has not changed in the last forty years and with four of the five original members of the band back together they seem as though they haven't been apart. The music it self is tight with poetic lyrics and protests.

Let me make one note here: I think that protest songs are an art form that most artists cannot do, and especially cannot do well. This is because they turn into nothing but name calling. "Superbird" is one of those that falls into the camp of nothing but name calling. "Cakewalk to Baghdad" could have been great; yes, it starts out using David Perle's name, but only in reference to who coined the term "Cakewalk to Baghdad", but falls from grace by being reduced to name calling. On the other hand, "An Untitled Protest" is good, but probably the best protest song ever written has to be "I-Feel-Like-I'm-Fixin'-to-Die Rag." Now that is what a protest song should be — in this case, a satire that at once makes your feelings known as well as infecting your head with a tune that won't go away — and those kazoos!

Overall the quality of the DVD is good and the band is tight. There are some delays between songs where the band just stands around waiting for others to get ready; it almost seems too long, but it also gives the feeling of being an unedited live show. The songs are true to form, from the loving "Janis", the love song to Grace Slick called "Grace," the wonderfully eerie "Section 43," the weird structure of "Masked Marauder," to the country-rock of "Not So Sweet Martha Lorraine."

Overall, *Turned Up And Turned On* is a really good performance by a classic '60s protest band. They came out of the San Francisco movement and the feel is still there. If you are into sixties retro, liked the classic Country Joe and the Fish tunes, or just want a bit of old fashioned entertainment, then I think you will enjoy *Turned Up And Turned On*.

Turned Up And Turned On song listing:

Entertainment Is My Business [4:33]
Summer of Love [5:26]
Janis [2:43]
Superbird [3:13]
Cakewalk to Baghdad [4:05]
Untitled Protest [4:53]
Section 43 [7:27]
Not So Sweet Martha Lorraine [5:08]
Happiness Is a Porpoise Mouth [4:06]
Oh Jamaica [6:37]
Flying High [4:15]

Rock & Soul Music [8:39]
Save the Whales [7:48]

T. Michael Testi is a photographer, writer, software developer and ardent fantasy football fan and of horse race handicapping. He also blogs at [PhotographyTodayNet](#) and at [All This and Everything Else](#)

Comments

#1 – July 11, 2007 @ 15:27PM – Lee Felsenstein [\[URL\]](#)

A point of history - the Free Speech Movement did not organize any demonstrations against the Vietnam war - it was an umbrella organization that fought for the right of student to organize for any political activity, and it dissolved itself shortly after that right was effectively won.

The FSM created the political and cultural space for other organizations such as the Vietnam Day Committee to form and organize the demonstrations for which Country Joe wrote his songs.

Much more detailed information can be found on the web page of [The Free Speech Movement Archives](#).

#2 – July 11, 2007 @ 15:45PM – T. Michael Testi [\[URL\]](#)

Lee,
Thanks for the info, I do appreciate it. Anything to make the record more accurate.

T.

