



Johnny Winter
Live Through the 70s DVD
MVD Visual

I honestly had no idea so much high-quality film footage of Johnny Winter performances from the 70s existed. Unlike today, where a relatively small amount of money can produce pretty nice-looking video footage, filming someone in the 70s was hard work and it was expensive. What you tend to see from that era, then, is either the same few well-filmed performances over and over and over, or else something that's sub-par quality.

To be fair, the quality does vary on this Johnny Winter collection a bit. The 1970 Royal Albert Hall footage is a little rough, but it's not too far away from, say, some of stuff that made it into the Woodstock film. However, you've also got the mind-blowing footage from the Gladsaxe Teen Club in Denmark, 1970, pro-shot film of the band in what appears to be a corner dive-sized bar playing a shit-hot version of "Frankenstein" to a bunch of moody, detached-looking teenaged Danes. It's such an amazing, crystal-clear portrait of how the band looked and sounded in 1970 that the only thing that can possibly be disputed is whether the band or the audience is uglier.

The video format allows for the twin pleasures of being able to see the band work in tandem as a single unit and also, in lighter moments, to admire/be horrified by some of the fashion disasters - see the leather top-hat/beard/platform shoe ensemble Johnny's rocking (not to mention the "Stars Wars jumpsuit with a Cossack hat" of his bandmate) in the 1973 Connecticut footage, which you can be entertained by as the band performs a hot version of "Rock and Roll Hootchie Koo."

Guitarists and/or serious students of the instrument will receive the biggest thrill of all. To these folks, *Live Through the 70s* will almost be a form of pornography. Johnny is widely considered to be one of the finest rock guitarists of his time, and the opportunity to not only hear him live but actually be able to see him play, as well as the ample glances at the gear itself that the disc allows, makes this disc an ideal gift for the guitar nerd in your life.

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