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**Iggy & the Stooges: Escaped Maniacs [DVD]**

(Charly) Rated: N/A  
US release date: 15 July 2008

by **Tim J. Nelson**

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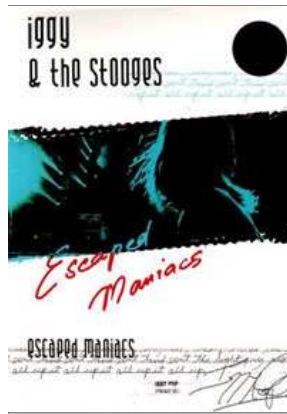
Yes, there's justice in the Universe. As the Stooges celebrate 30 years since their formation, a DVD, *Escaped Maniacs* (Charly Films/MVD Visual) combines a searing live performance in Belgium and lot of extra goodies. Yelps, howls, gurgles, and vocal-chord punches abound, while crunchy, fuzzy guitar, thumping bass, and slapping drums bombard.

The live performance is powerful. To see Iggy (born Jim Osterberg, AKA Iggy Pop) and his early bandmates reunited is a joyful, magical experience. The DVD includes an original version and a director's cut, contrasting the same set with two different visions. "Loose" kicks off the show and it catapults the energy level to overdrive, taking the viewer into the Stooges' "Mind Room". Like a true rock gig, let alone a "punk" show, one track leads right into the next, showing how the Stooges influenced bands like the Ramones, Television, the Misfits, Sonic Youth, and many others.

The highlights here are "Down on the Street", "1969", "T.V. Eye", "Dirt", "Real Cool Time", "No Fun", and "Fun House". During "Real Cool Time", Iggy invites the crowd up on stage with the band, "Get the f#@! up here! Let 'em up!" A dozen or so fans obey and shake their bones to the last few bars and then he tells them to stay up on stage as he calls for the Stooges to begin "No Fun". This is one of those rare rock-gig moments. Seriously, I almost tear up with emotion to see an innovative artist like Jim celebrating two of his classic compositions with his fans, live, in this case, the rejoicing folks up on stage hopping around, singing along.

Sure, Jim's no "spring chicken", but he rocks harder and looks better at 60 than some 30-year-olds I know. His performance throughout the set is energetic and he leads the band—Scott "Rock Action" Asheton on drums, Ron Asheton on guitar, and newest member (since 2003) Mike Watt (The Minutemen, Missingmen) on bass, replacing deceased original, Dave Alexander. After viewing this DVD, I was keyed up to see the Stooges live, and their performance at Baltimore's Virgin Mobile Festival in August delivered.

Despite disappointing reviews for their latest CD release, *The Weirdness*, *Escaped Maniacs* celebrates the history and current gift of the Stooges' live show—yes, they still have it. The extra goodies include interviews with Iggy Pop, Ron & Scott Asheton, an Iggy retrospective, and some pdf files with classic (1970/71) articles from *Creem* magazine, and other rare treats.



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Some distractions are the repetitive use of images of Iggy in the retrospective and a few ill-placed subtitles, but all in all it's a fun, engaging sensory experience. For the cost of two Hamiltons, fans new and old will own a real treasure, something this fan has already viewed more than seven times. I better order another copy as a back-up.

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— 17 September 2008

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