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Dead End Drive-In: Now Showing - Eddie & the Hot Rods

Written by Gaz E
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Eddie & the Hot Rods - 'Live At The Astoria' (Wienerworld)

Since forming in Southend on Sea in 1975, Eddie & the Hot Rods have enjoyed an incident-strewn career that takes in US tours with the Ramones and Talking Heads, a hit single after a streamlining of the band name, a young outfit called the Sex Pistols trashing the band's gear when supporting them at the Marquee, a collaboration with the MC5's Rob Tyner, and around a million different band members, some of them going on to play with everyone from The Damned to Elvis Costello, Stiff Little Fingers to Transvision Vamp.

After splitting in 1981, singer Barrie Masters - the only constant member - reformed the band in 1984, the 'new' version of the band lasting just a year, before, in 1992, the 'classic' line-up of the band regrouped to record the 'Gasoline Days' album. The album that followed in 2005, 'Better Late Than Never', saw Masters return with another all-new band line-up: this one, however (Masters joined by guitarists Chris Taylor and Richard Holgarth, bassist Dipster and drummer Simon Bowley), toughing it out and still performing together in 2014.

The 2005 tour in support of the aforementioned 'Better Late Than Never' album culminated in a 30th birthday show at the London Astoria, the pub rock wares on offer captured by the cameras and released a year or so later as 'Eddie & the Hot Rods - Live 2005', the long-deleted title now dug up from the archives to be repackaged and re-released by Wienerworld on a Region-Free PAL DVD freshly-titled, 'Eddie & the Hot Rods Live At The Astoria'.

There might not be any sign of Eddie, the dummy used in the band's early shows, and the show may only have a running time of approximately one hour, but this disc should satisfy anyone who has followed the career of the Hot Rods, if they don't already own it.

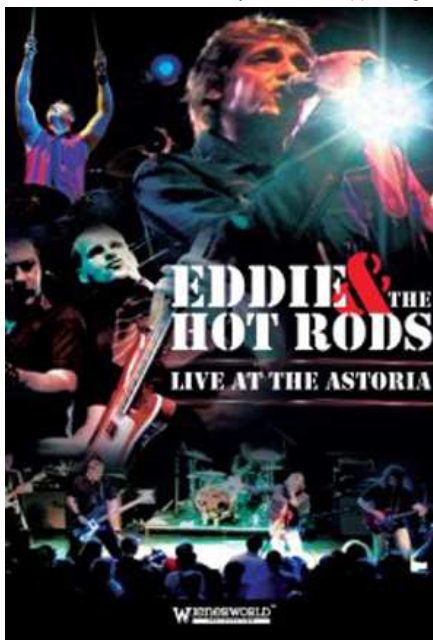
Opening with a debut album one-two of title track 'Teenage Depression' and 'The Kids Are Alright', the band tears straight into a couple of songs - 'Better Without You' and 'Deep Blue Interceptor' - from (then) new album 'Better Late Than Never'. The newer material goes down well with the punter collective rammed up close and personal at the front of the stage - good job really, as three more tunes from the album get lifted for inclusion in the fourteen song setlist: 'I Need Your Touch', 'Bad Time Again' and 'Hard Driving Man'.

'Do Anything You Wanna Do', of course, makes an appearance: the song that hit number 9 on the UK singles chart when selling singles, like the chart itself, actually mattered, appearing, maybe surprisingly, in the first half of the set, not far behind 'Quit This Town', also from the band's second album, 'Life On The Line', the 1977 record that peaked at number 27 in the UK album chart, the title track of which appears here also.

"Let that be the only rule of your life," says Masters after 'Do Anything You Wanna Do', "apart from this one..." the band throwing out a fine 'Love Love Love' from 'Gasoline Days', that album also represented by 'Human Touch'. 'Love...' does feature a drum solo which, I'm sure, will make many a viewer utter a different four letter word over and over again. 'The Power and the Glory', the opening track of band's third album, 1979's 'Thriller', readdresses the balance.

Where else could the show end but with a storming run through of Van Morrison's 'Gloria', Masters rolling back the years, a middle-aged fan lumbering onto the stage to sing with the frontman?

Eddie & the Hot Rods are an important part of rock 'n' roll history, whether it be as a pioneer of pub rock or a precursor to punk rock. Releases like 'Live At The Astoria' and the new compilation album '3 Sides



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to punk rock. Releases like *Live At the Astoria*, and the new compilation album, *2 Stories*, keep the momentum going, as do the live shows that the band keeps on booking. It's crucial that we celebrate bands like this, in whatever guise they appear in 2014.



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