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Zebra: The DVD (DVD)

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In 1975 Randy Jackson, Felix Hanemann and Guy Gelso formed Zebra and together the band would break house attendance records in their hometown of New Orleans. They were a Hard Rock band that came into popularity because of their excellent renditions of Rush, and most specifically Led Zeppelin tunes. They also blended in some of their original material to their nightly set and these songs were incredibly powerful and proved that they were not just some run of the mill band. After being convinced



about it by Peppy Marchello (from The Good Rats), the band would relocate to Long Island, NY and become kings of the growing Rock club scene out there. It was a scene that found bands such as Twisted Sister also on the same path to success. This move found Zebra becoming immediate favorites of the club crowds on the island and it was as if the band had begun in this area as opposed to New Orleans. A record deal was soon secured on Atlantic Records where the band would release three studio albums and a live recording - the rest of course is Zebra history.

This DVD celebrates the bands thirty year career and presents live footage filmed in their native Long Island's club The Downtown (now since closed) as well as The House Of Blues in New Orleans, LA. When you watch the film from the beginning without skipping around you are brought back to where it all began as a group and you are offered insight into their "origin story" as it's told by the individual members. It covers from how they met and came up with the name to how the quest for gigs and touring began even before the record deal was signed. It's pretty interesting stuff to observe because their success was not only based on the hard work of the band but also the actions of several people who believed in their music. One such fan was WBAB's Bob Buchman, now heard on Q104.3 FM, who was a radio DJ who played the bands demo over and over again because he felt it was that good. His commentary is quite relevant to the story and origins of the group. Most viewers will find this educational as some of the tales show just how frustrating life as a working musician can be at times. We also hear from friends of the band such as "Stuttering" John & Jackie Martling (both former personalities from the Howard Stern show and Long Island bred entertainers) and members of Twisted Sister. Now let's talk about the songs presented on the release which span the bands four studio albums.

From beginning to end the music featured on this DVD presents the greatest hits that the band ever had in the eyes of those who loved them most. It's footage that is compiled and blended together from three separate gigs over the last couple of years at The Downtown and House of Blues. The majority of the footage is from HoB and probably the best inclusions on the release based on angles and overall production but the Long Island stuff is cool as well. One of the performances used on this was when they were doing an almost acoustic performance, which I reviewed as a concert elsewhere on the site. As a matter of fact if you look over to Felix's side during these segments you might see me taking photos of the band as they played. The sixteen songs truly capture Zebra in their best element and that is the live stage. Having seen the group perform on a number of occasions over the years I have yet to see a bad gig and simply