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Cutting Crew: Live at Full House



Imagine my disappointment when the rock concert disc *Cutting Crew: Live at Full House* turns out *not* to have Uncle Jessie sitting in on drums. Oh well, one can still dream with the aid of hallucinogenic mushrooms, can't they?

As anyone who's seen a late night infomercial pitching triple-disc musical compilations of the decade can no doubt attest, the late '80s FM landscape was ruled by a few dozen chart-topping hits, and high up on the list was "**I Just Died in Your Arms**," by **Cutting Crew**. The mid-tempo tune dropped in 1986, when the synth-driven sound of New Wave was in its death rattle. Still, that didn't stop the song — with its pleading, borderline-overwrought chorus evocation — from becoming **a slow dance staple at high school and middle school dances** everywhere. For those that have known the British-Canadian band only through that worldwide hit (or perhaps not at all), this performance disc featuring a 1987 Hamburg, Germany concert serves as a nice, and bit broader, introduction to the group, a frequent tour partner for similarly upbeat acts like The Bangles and Huey Lewis and the News.

Though a spare dash, musically speaking (it clocks in at seven songs, and a cumulative 44 minutes), *Cutting Crew: Live at Full House* includes a nice extra. As well as introducing the band's set, **moderator Alan Bangs interviews singer Nick van Eede and guitarist Kevin Scott MacMichael on the group's founding, influences and instrumentation**. Though it's a period piece chat, and a contrasting modern update would have been interesting, one gratefully takes what one can get when it comes to castaway bands like Cutting Crew. In addition to the obvious, other highlights include "Any Colour" and "Fear of Falling." They may not have deserved sustained, godhead status, but Cutting Crew comes across as certainly better than their current obscurity might suggest. **C+ (Concert) C+ (Disc)**