

VERITAS VAMPIRUS

ISSUE 1,289 APR. 2017

by Mark S. Tucker

RHINO BUCKET – *The Last Real Rock 'n Roll* (2017 / Acetate)

Back in '94, I was turned on to these guys by a member of the Firestone family - I don't know how the hell I've run into so many six-degrees people in this lifetime, but I have. We worked together at Northrop Aircraft and, knowing he dug the rough and tumble of AC/DC, I turned him onto Slade, gave him the *Alive* LP, and he, knowing I dug Angus 'n the yobs as much as him, gave me the debut Rhino Bucket CD. I'd never heard of 'em, but, after the first spin, went out and nabbed *Get Used to It* and *Pain*. Then an unexplained decade-long drought occurred from 1995 – 2005, the Bucketeers fading from view. 2006 resumed the history and, to this moment, they're still the only group you could possibly square with the post-Geordie band.

Now *The Last Real Rock 'n Roll* has arrived, after 2013's live *Sunrise on Sunset*, and the band shows no signs of softening, the same old kick-ass, rave-up, rock 'n roll bastards they've always been. Some things should stay the same, yes?, and this is one of them. Dave Ducey maintains a driving score-the-beat set of drums, founder George Dolivo remains rooted on rhythm guitar and lead vocals, lead guitarist Brian "Damage" Forsythe joined in 2012 and henceforward became the frontal assault of the quartet while bass player Reeve Downes wields a phat bass oft expanding almost into keyboard territory, supplying a lot of the enfolding colorations. Put it all together and that spells h-e-a-d-b-a-n-g-e-r-y.

"Falling Down the Stairs" is about exactly that, though not quite in mosh pit fashion - "Falling down the stairs again / After one too many beers / Falling down the stairs again / I've got my feet up in the air" – an emergency-ward ode to hard partying. "It's a Sin" is pure stomped lament upon living on fucked-up planet Earth while "Forgiveness" flips the bird at that dumb-ass Christian mis-concept of live and let live after you've been jacked up. Both songs cut in sharp-edged solos from Forsyth, Divolo always comping him like a bulldog lapping up the fall-out. There's not a ballad among the dozen cuts here, so I suggest one and all forego the tea and crumpets, opting instead for Seagram's and Thai stick. That way, no one will harbor any illusions about what'll be going down.

Oh, and a last little note: should you get caught into to these guys like I have, when you go back to catch up, don't miss *No Song Left Behind*. Mis-cast as a "compilation album", it's nothing of the sort but instead 15 tracks of unreleased, live, and demo materials that are constantly balls out, rockin' until the blood starts slipping out yer ears, and a great way to irritate the Republican Trumpophiles neighbors next door. Well worth capturing on more than one front.