



Blood, Sweat & Tears SPINNING WHEEL

<http://wc08.allmusic.com/cg/amg.dll?p=amg&sql=10:gprfzxe5ldhe>

This classic footage of {Blood, Sweat & Tears} was recorded on April 9th, 1980 at the {~Civic Theatre} in Halifax, UK when concert promoter, {Jeffrey S. Kruger}, had a crew film the "last night of the U.K. leg of the tour" according to {Clive Richardson}'s liner notes from the companion DVD to this, the group {War}'s {^Loose Grooves: Funkin' Live In England, 1980}. Not only does {War} get a cooler title and liner notes, that band also gets the thumbs up as the better of the two concerts. On one hand there's no denying that the {David Clayton Thomas} version of B.S. & T. racked up the hits, but there's also no denying that the artistic integrity {Al Kooper}'s vision along with his, well - blood, sweat and tears, brought to the mix is nullified by the presence of Clayton-Thomas. Eleven years after they dominated the charts the singer and frontman takes the stage like a biker the Hell's Angels banished from Altamont. It is not a pretty sight. He also has no original members of the group from the first three albums but many musicians from the {^Nuclear Blues} album, a 1980 release on {LAX} and {MCA} produced by {War} producer {Jerry Goldstein}. So you have {David Clayton-Thomas} and a new band as {Blood, Sweat and Tears}. The film is grainy and dark, though it captures the moment in fine fashion.

Five of the six chart hits are here, everything but {"Go Down Gamblin' "} and a rendition of {"God Bless The Child"} which was pretty much an FM staple back in the day. When the band got a lot of flak by the underground press for releasing {"Lucretia MacEvil"} and totally "selling out" the old {Greg Shaw} axiom could come into play - "hear anything a thousand times on the radio and it becomes passable." Well, time is not kind to Lucretia so the one minute and twenty-three second rendition is merciful in its brevity. {Carole King}'s {"Hi De Ho"} as well as {Laura Nyro}'s one contribution fare better but wouldn't you rather be watching King's band {The City} performing it? Or better still, a video of {Laura Nyro} singing lead for {Blood, Sweat & Tears}? There's no interview footage, no bonus tracks, and unlike {War}'s DVD, no liner notes.

Clayton-Thomas takes a much welcome break after saying {"You Made Me So Very Happy"} was "Blood Sweat & Tears 1970" (it was actually 1969). He then introduces on classical guitar {Robert Piitch} and the turnaround is quick and quite amazing. The instrumental {"Spanish Wine"} from the album they are touring behind is stunningly brilliant. Six minutes and twenty-five seconds of classical guitar meets jazz-rock followed by ten minutes and forty-three seconds of {"Blood Sweat And Tears Blues"}.

Dropped are the Las Vegas trappings for some Latin Jazz that fits perfectly with what their pals on the bill, {War}, were up to. A perfect complement. {David Clayton-Thomas} re-emerges to compete with {Pat Boone}'s 1997 version of {"The Wind Cries Mary"} for the distinction of the worst rendition of a {Jimi Hendrix} tune ever recorded. Two minutes and seven seconds of {"Manic Depression"} which would have Jimi running for the lithium. Awful doesn't describe the travesty. Imagine a drunk biker getting up with the band {Flint} - ex {Grand Funk Railroad} as a bar band - and you'll have a clue.

A {Fred Heller} is listed as Executive Producer and one asks the question, "Wait a minute, isn't Heller the guy who forgot to film {Mott The Hoople} on Broadway?" A quick google gets you {Ian Hunter}'s fan page where someone asks him about the {~Uris Theater} concerts not being filmed. The reply: "We were managed by {Fred Heller} and our label was {Columbia Records}. There's two great reasons for a start!" Decades after the fact the rhetorical question is what would you rather be reading about - a DVD of {Mott The Hoople} on Broadway or {David Clayton-Thomas} covering {Jimi Hendrix}'s {"Manic Depression"} in a truncated version which unceremoniously stops cold like the last episode of {#The Sopranos} by this "Son of Blood, Sweat & Tears" vehicle?

- Joe Viglione