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I Like To Rock: Live In London 1981 April Wine



I must admit I am a bit confused by April Wine, the quintet from Canada. Never a huge fan, I only ever knew them from "Gypsy Queen" and "Between You and Me." In viewing the April Wine DVD, **I Like To Rock: Live In London 1981**, I learned that this band I never knew all that much about was a hell of a lot heavier than I ever realized.

This is a band with three lead guitar players (at least at the time this concert was filmed) — all proficient and all with different styles. I liken some of the tunes to Thin Lizzy with their dual-lead approach, and others to Foghat with that kind of blues shuffle thing, and still others...well, are pure April Wine. And though this DVD is a simple affair, without any extras (the only stuff other than typical concert footage is some scenes of the band traipsing around London), this is a nice 16-song testament as to what April Wine were about way back in the day.

Opening with a couple of heavy tunes, "Big City Girls" and "Crash and Burn," the band rollicks through a well-played set. Very light on staging pyrotechnics or posturing, the only real effects here were added later in post-production; you know the typical 'mirror' image thing when a guitarist takes a lead, or that 'heat wave' effect added round the singer's head. April Wine really does remind me of Foghat, Lizzy and other bands of yore — well-seasoned players performing, light on audience interaction, heavy on riffs and proficiency.

At the time, the band had enlisted a third guitarist, Myles Goodwyn, who is especially blistering on slide guitar on "Ladies Man." But we really get to experience the triple guitar attack on the funky "Telling Me Lies," a song utilizing three guitars to the fore. When the band kicks into "21st Century Man" — a take on King Crimson's "21st Century Schizoid Man" — each guitarist takes a lead.

As I mentioned before, I was familiar with "Gypsy Queen" and the mega hit, "Between You and Me" from MTV, but I enjoyed getting to know more about April Wine and hearing how heavy they really were. **I Like To Rock: Live In London 1981** is a tight little set for true April Wine fans or even those of us who would like to see (and hear) more of what this Canadian band was all about.

~ Ralph Greco, Jr.

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