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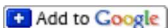
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Review by [Kurt Dahlke](#) | posted October 16, 2008 | [E-mail the Author](#) | [Start a Discussion](#)

Hanoi Rocks: The Nottingham Tapes:

Live music is best, so the saying goes. However, I don't usually think of recommending a concert DVD as a way to introduce someone to an unfamiliar band's material. In the case of Hanoi Rocks: The Nottingham Tapes, I'm sticking to my guns regardless of the fact that this is full of great footage from an awesome concert finding the band Hanoi Rocks at the height of its power.

The 23rd of April, 1984, at the Palais in Nottingham England is when and where we find the boys, benefiting from the presence of a video crew already amped and geared up from filming an all-day punk festival. What that crew, named Jettisoundz, captured is 58 minutes of punk/ glam/ blues-rock infused mayhem that feels too authentic, frenzied and vital to have come from anywhere but the distant past. Back then music seemed to mean more, and the kids were always ready to let loose.

I'm not now and wasn't then a fan of Hanoi Rocks, though I saw the name around enough to know there was something going on. As I've been on a tear lately, revisiting my early/ mid-eighties music fantasy - when I was transitioning from Van Halen and The Police to P.I.L., Big Audio Dynamite and such - it's clear to see Hanoi Rocks might have been right up my alley. And this DVD from Cherry Red Films/ Cherry Red Records should fit right in for anyone with a UK fetish, those of us who took our cues from the Rock Over London radio program.

Clearly filmed on video, but up-close-and-personal, The Nottingham Tapes capture these songs and covers from the Hanoi repertoire:

Back To Mystery City
Up Around The Bend
I Cant Get It
Motorvatin'
Lighting Bar Blues
Boulevard Of Broken Dreams
Don't Never Leave Me
Tragedy
Malibu Beach
Underwater World
Don't Follow Me
I Feel Alright
Taxi Driver
Blitzkrieg Bop

I'll admit that, however well crafted, these tunes didn't totally light my fire. The sheer intensity and passion on display makes me a believer, however. And though Blitzkrieg Bop isn't what you'd call a stretch as far as covers go (for this band) the ludicrous frenzy incited is a testament to the power of rock and roll - when 80% of your stage presence is drunken yobs who have nothing to do with the band other than boozed-up devotion and permission to take the stage, you've got some serious mojo going. (For added poignancy, late drummer Razzle handles the mic for this finale.) I liked the CCR cover (Up Around The Bend) for its genre-blending forethought (and to this day I'm

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not sure why CCR hasn't had a more global effect). Otherwise, this is a fat concert video that fans of the band couldn't help but love, even including the hardcore video-tracers evident every time the camera catches the glint of chrome under a spotlight.

Vocalist Michael Monroe's glam-punk-rock-a-billy composite - part David Bowie, part Iggy Pop, part Daniel Ash (the hair at least) is a bit hard to reconcile, but there's no denying that wiry musculature, a body builder on 300 calories a day, and his mastery of the stage is a joy to watch. Meanwhile his mates do their best rock-star bits with un-tucked shirts, vests, bolo ties and weird hats (you bet I rocked that look in the day) for a deliriously transporting time. If you even glanced in this direction in your salad days, this concert will make you realize why you at least should have scrawled Hanoi Rocks on your notebook or neighborhood merchant's wall.

The DVD

Video:

The concert comes to us in 1.33:1 fullscreen ratio, and as noted is filmed on video with quality appropriate for the time (1984). By today's DVD standards the image is not clear. Colors aren't even that great, but with these pasty boys, it's hard to tell. The main image problem are those persistent ghost images from microphone stands or anything else highly reflective - I'll bet money that apertures (or whatever) were adjusted for just such an effect, however, so there you go. At almost a quarter-century old, and for essentially an impromptu document, this is plenty fresh.

Sound:

PCM (a type of room-sound microphone, if I remember correctly) Stereo Audio is not great compared to other, modern concert DVDs. In fact you might say the sound is bad, but for what is essentially an unplanned chunk of footage - minus all the tension that might come from trying to mount a reference standard sound recording - so hardcore fans should be happy to swap spontaneity for fidelity.

Extras:

There aren't really any extras except for brief **Previews** of about a half-dozen other Cherry Red Films concert videos, including the likes of Flesh For Lulu and Danielle Dax. All I'm sayin' is how come I wasn't more into this shit when it was a going concern, because pretty much all of these brief snippets totally whetted my appetite for some of that good old mid '80s Brit Pop pseudo goth madness that I loved so much (ala Echo and The Bunnymen and Love and Rockets). If any of this sounds up your dark alley, check out what Cherry Red Films has to offer.

Final Thoughts:

The name Hanoi Rocks seemed as ubiquitous as Van Halen to me in the early '80s, but for whatever reason they never made that huge leap to stateside domination. This sincere document of one of their towering sets offers no clues as to why that never happened (other than a possible lack of radio-friendly MOR tunes - like maybe covering Dancing In The Streets ...) but devotees would do well to seek this DVD out, and casual fans of Euro rock from the era, who haven't been introduced to the Hanoi Rocks sound ought to give it a listen too. Music fans, this concert is **Recommended**.

"Can I finish my coffee? It's the only thing good on the ship." Dahlke occasionally tears into genre crud at the absolutely essential [Video Sewer](#).

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