

TOO HOT TO HANDLE: The Story of UFO (2005) DVD Various Artists

MVD



Initially, the idea of a whole DVD's worth of vintage live **UFO** performances and talking head clips just sounded exhausting to me. I mean, besides Pete Way's stripy spandex ensembles, there's not a whole lot to actually see with this band. But the more I thought about it, the more I realized how vital UFO actually were to rock n' roll in their ludicrous amount of years in operation. I mean, nobody really thinks about UFO very much these days, do they? Certainly not in the US, where only a handful of tracks (*Too Hot to Handle*, *Doctor Doctor*, *Lights Out*) ever got any radio play. But the UFO legacy does not rest in hit singles or even it's numerous spin-off bands (Motorhead, Fastway, Waysted, MSG, Mogg/Way, etc.), but in it's Spinal Tap-esque crotch-grabbing grandeur. Whenever we think of 1970's 'arena rock' these days, it is difficult to peg down exactly who we're talking about. The prototypical arena rock band in our mind had to have lots of guitar solos, crazy lighting rigs, groin-exhibiting shiny trousers, flowing manes, and many, many songs about girls who give good head. Now, who do you think that describes, Triumph? Too Canadian. REO Speedwagon? Too many satin shirts. Nuge? Nuge wasn't a band, it was a maniac in a loincloth. No, the arena rock band of our mind was UFO. They even had a cowbell-heavy song called "*Rock Bottom*"! And we gotta thank 'em for all that. It's not easy being **THAT GUY**, never mind **THAT BAND**, you know?

So, with my newfound respect for these shirtless Brit show-offs, I dove into "Too Hot to Handle", hoping for a few tinfoil-wrapped cucumbers or "cold sore" outbreaks to justify my above rant.

I did not find any instances of either. What I did find was about 5,000 hours of German ruff tyrant Michael Shenker's noodly solos, and three very sober band members (Shenker, Mogg, Way) methodically drawling out their less-than-gripping history. There's also a few quotes scattered about from various members of Def Lep and Iron Maiden. Both bands lay claim to heavy UFO influence, and since both bands have lots of noodly guitar solos, we can safely assume they mean it, *maan*. Otherwise, you get seventeen live perfs, shot in various, ahem, arenas, and spanning a good portion of their early-mid career. The interview bits were shot much later; "The Story of UFO" was originally released in Japan in 1994, and that looks to be the era of the yakkity-yak. I imagine that this whole package is boner-popping to hardcore UFO-heads, but to the Plebian viewer looking for the arena rock in their mind, this may prove a little underwhelming.

Hmm. Maybe it was Nazareth we were thinking about. Supertramp? Bloodrock?!

-Sleazegrinder

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