



NRBQ and the Whole Wheat Horns

Derbytown: Live 1982

Musical Video Distributors

NRBQ is one of the most underappreciated bands in rock and roll history, and even this poorly-shot live show from 1982 does not change that. In fact, despite the grainy appearance, odd angles, and overall amateurish approach here, this is a must-have.

The beauty of NRBQ is you never know

what's coming. Their show this evening opened with "That's All," and features Al Anderson on lead guitar and vocals. He really was Big Al then, and his growling vocal and incredible guitar playing really let you in on the secret of the band...they are (and were) great musicians. This one swings and Anderson's soloing crosses genres from rock-to-jazz-to-blues and everything in-between. Some parts have a decidedly bop feel. And Terry Adams goofing at the keyboard (for that matter, all over the stage) starts here and doesn't let up until the show's over.

Before all is said and done, we hear the kind of pop magic that bassist Joe Spampinato brings on songs like "I

Love Her, She Loves Me." How about a quirky version of "Mambo Jambo?" You want quirky? Bring Donn Adams down from the horn section and let him sing a made-up version of "Sink the Bismark." There's a lot of great "normal" tunes, too. "Green Lights" gets full treatment here. It's hard to believe the song was never a hit.

Production be damned, the music and sheer fun of the band manage to override that. Throw in fun extras like "Me and the Boys" from a TV promo where the boys actually don't play the right instruments, and other promo clips, and you've got a treasure trove for fans, and a fine introduction for other folks. — *JH*