



The Jesus Lizard DVD - Music Video Distributors 2007



Call me "A Revolutionary Whose Path-Blazing Opinions Tear Down Established Dogma," but I never understood why people raved about The Jesus Lizard's live shows. Maybe it's because I'd already seen so many unhinged Cows concerts? Or because the Jesus Lizard already sounded so raw and live on LP, the in-person performances just seemed redundant? I mean, certainly David Yow threw himself full-force into his live performance, but the guitarist and bassist mostly just stood there and played their parts exactly like the record the whole time, and of what interest is that? Anyway, whatever the reason, I just found their shows too predictable to get all that excited about. In fact, by the fourth and final time I saw them, The Jon Spencer Blues Explosion blew them off the stage -- and I don't even *like* The Jon Spencer Blues Explosion.

Enter Music Video Distributors' 2007 DVD release of a 1994 Boston performance by Chicago's The Jesus Lizard, which answers the question of my disinterest once and for all:

I WAS SPOILED.

See, there were great shows all the *time* back then (and probably still are; I'm just not of age to enjoy it anymore). So I guess my expectations of being blown away all the time were raised too high. I was seriously going to like 3 or 4 shows every single week back then. Now that I'm living a domesticated, older person's life, all I can say upon viewing this DVD is "Christ! What a great fucking band they were!" This young, energetic group of intelligent, creative rock performers will never exist again -- wiry Duane Denison playing his creepy riffs, beefy David Wm. Sims playing bass lines that should be leads, Mac McNeilly wearing Boxers and opening/closing his mouth with every full-bodied drumbeat, and surprisingly fit and hirsute David Yow screaming with the mic halfway down his throat, tossing out funny stage patter reft and light, and spending most of the show on top of the audience. They both look and sound legendary. Thank God somebody thought to film them when they were still filmable.

In addition to the Boston performance, the disc includes five songs from a Merle Allin-filmed 1992 CBGB performance (when Sims had shaggier hair and no beard!) and a great 15-minute interview with Yow filmed for some cable access show. Between the two performances, they perform 5 **Goat** songs (6 if you count both "Mouth Breather"s), 4

each from **Down** and **Head**, 3 **Liars**, 2 b-side covers, 1 **Pure** and - strangest of all - 1 from **Shot**, which they hadn't even begun recording at this point! (It's "Mailman," which David Yow refers to as "a cover of a new Soundgarden song," likely confusing quite a few audience members in the process) (not that I'm knocking The Process. In fact, in many ways I like to think of myself as the "Omega" of online record reviewers! Heh HEEE!!! hehhejeawr yeaaaaaaah cult humor)

Other funny things David Yow says include:

- "HEY, GET THAT GUY OUTTA HERE! GET HIM OUTTA HERE! Thank you. (*pause*) OH, FUCKER! DID YOU SEE THAT FUCKIN' SON OF A BITCH? I FUCKIN WA DOWIDA ZUBBIDA SUH! ISSA NOW A ZIBBIDIZUH! FUCKER!"

- "Who else has earplugs in? Dude, get those the fuck outta there! What the fuck's your problem? (*pretends to start crying*) It's too loud! It hurts my hearing!"

- "Get to it! Clear out! Stupid...."

- "Alright Cambridge! Thanks very much. M.I.T.!"

The live sound is excellent, though one of the cameramen dicks around with his zoom button so much, you keep expecting Lina Romay's pubic hair to pop into the frame (Heh HEEE!!! hehhejeawr yeaaaaaaah cult humor). And the Yow interview is a great bonus for 'with-it' fans, taking place as it does immediately after the band's falling-out with Steve Albini. He discusses (without naming names) how the producer "who likes to be called an engineer, but acts like a producer" had put too much of his own stamp on the previous records, rather than just doing what they told him to do. Hindsight five billion, but **Down** is the most muted-sounding Jesus Lizard record ever, and I'm pretty sure David would agree (great songs, but they never EXPLODE into your living room the way the previous records did). He goes on to politely insult Green Day ("It's like The Knack!") and talk about all the ridiculous cuts that MTV forced them to make to the "Puss" video -- including a shot of Yow spitting. And a guy blowing a kiss at another guy. MTV -- RADICAL YOUTH CULTURE 1994!

The bonus footage is all green probably because Merle Allin had his camera lodged up his ass before the show, but pay notation when Yow thanks the opening bands -- they were the Poster Children and Polvo! Just two more once-great bands that petered out and passed away into tomorrow's yesterdays.

Oh, my bad. I meant "yesterday's tomorrows."

Reader Comments

nanja_monja@hotmail.fr

I got the reference to Jesus Franco. Have I won something? Am I part of the elite?

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