

## REVIEW

# End of Summer: Rick Wakeman, Ken Hesley, Ted Nugent, Schenker & Schwarz, Poison & Jon Anderson



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Part of [Marty's Musical Meltdown](#)

The beginning of my busman's holiday in Maine greeted me with a hefty pile, measured in feet, of DVDs and CDs for my attention. Fortunately I have been able to have review discs on the deck pretty much constantly. Even managed to sneak in a viewing of the rather amusing Wakeman DVD; it's with the great man we start.

### DVD Review

#### **Rick Wakeman: *The Other Side***

In probably the mellowest of DVDs in my review pile, Rick Wakeman performs a solo show on piano and mic. He does no singing but fills the bits between with anecdotes and tales of the songs. Think of it as a "Storyteller's" where the performer does not have to just do the hits. Rick plays songs from his entire career including The Strawbs as well as taking a classical take on a couple of Beatles tracks. Wakeman also demonstrates his ability to hold a room with his chat not just his spectacular piano playing. His tale of his first performance as a 5-year old is most amusing.

Needless to say this is a must for fans or admirers of the great man. Fans of Yes might appreciate seeing another side to sometime Yes keyboardist Rick. A pleasant, amusing and fascinating way to spend slightly over 100 minutes. What is not to like?

### CD Reviews

#### **Ken Hensley: *Blood on the Highway***

A concept album of sorts about the early '70s history of this great man recalling his days in Black Foot and Uriah Heep. New material that sounds modern and fitting is what you find here. He has invited a whole bunch of mates along including Glenn "I have to over sing everything" Hughes, Jorn Lande, John Lawton and Eve Gallagher. This CD was recorded in Alicante in Spain, and it drips with class and talent. There is nothing on here that one could consider a dud or filler. The 14 tracks never sound tired or dull. Every track clearly demonstrates the talent of the man.

A must for the fans of the man and his past bands, this is also a testament to a time of great importance for heavy rock. A real treat for hard rock fans of any age.

#### **Ted Nugent: *Love Grenade***

What can you say about Uncle Ted that hasn't been said before? Slightly mad, totally outrageous and always over the top without so much as breaking a sweat. In the midst of a sell-out tour of the

U.S. in support of this CD he has taken swipes at his critics every chance he gets. Like most of the man's output, the CD is a mixed with at least one complete turd of a song.

That said tracks like "Broadside" and "Girl Scout Cookies" make this the perfect CD for the Indian Summer in the next few weeks. Over the top, in your face, brash and cranky, it's old Ted doing what he does best. Jack Blades of Damn Yankees and Night Ranger is along to play bass on a few tracks and produce the CD with Nugent. Nugent pays tribute to the band that gave him his start with a new version of "Journey to the Center of the Mind" by the Amboy Dukes.

Will it win him new fans? Probably not. It will keep his followers happy as they head to his gigs nearby and the rest of us can sit back imaging what its like to see him live in 2007. Girls, guns and rock & roll...wtf is there not to like?

### **Schenker & Schwarz: *Live Together***

Guitar extraordinaire and unreliable German nutcase Schenker and some German bloke called Siggie Schwarz do some impressive guitar dueling on this CD recorded live in 2004. Rather than having it a boring wankfest, bassist for the night Martin Hesner does an admirable job, with a bit of German butchering of the English language, of singing the tracks from Schenker's past like "Doctor, Doctor" & "Rock Bottom" and other blues rock classics.

He holds his own on tracks like 'Wishing Well' and the cheeky bonus track "Ice-cream Man." This is far from essential, but hearing two great blues guitarists have a wail of a time playing some great songs ain't a bad way to spend an hour or so. Jack Daniels optional, but useful, of course.

### **Poison: "*Poison'd*"**

Yep, you guessed it; Poison has jumped on the bandwagon of almost every group from the '80s and released a covers album. Not the worst of these outings or the best; this CD seems to be a stopgap until the band gets its arse in gear and does some new material. Fortunately they don't go for all the clichés and have some interesting choices on here like "What I like about You" by the Romantics and "Just What I Needed" by The Cars. They sound like they are having a good time, but don't really add much to the tracks.

Is this a must buy? Well no, but if you are a big fan of Poison, and considering the crowds they get there are quite a few of you, then you might be interested in seeing how they cover this stuff. Fun for a few spins at least...good for yer CD changer.

### **Jon Anderson: *The Mother's Day Concert***

Excruciatingly high-range singer Jon Anderson gets mellow and organic on this live CD playing a selection of tracks both from his past and others. What is most obvious about this CD is that the gig was never meant to be released. The recording is pretty lame and sounds like those bootleg tapes that get handed around in college. You can hear people talking during the tracks at times and it sounds weedy. Of course the hippies in the audience probably couldn't care less. One highlight is a stripped down version of "Owner of a Lonely Heart" and "I'll find my Way Home."

This comes from a series called "The Lost Tapes," one has to wonder whether they should have stayed that way. One for Jon Anderson/Yes completists only.

Well that is yer lot for this first week of autumn. This was the week we learned the mighty Led Zep is actually going to tour again. As always stay safe and check out live music as often as you can.

For me its back to the pile to find the hidden gems. Maybe checking out the CD covers below will give you a hint at one that meets with my approval.



Marty's band, Growing Old Disgracefully, can be found at: [Disgraceful Music](#). His Cthulhu tales can be found at [Temple of Dagon](#).

## Comments

#1 — September 9, 2007 @ 00:50AM — JC Mosquito

I think we're coming to the point in rock and roll where some of the old guys seemed to have gotten their second wind. And now that they don't have to live the excesses of a r'n'r life style, they're actually making good music again.

Of course, it doesn't apply to everyone - but it's always fun to see a young whippersnapper get his ear chewed on by an old dog with an old trick.

