



OSMONDS LIVE

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This is a surprisingly good concert by {The Osmond Brothers} performing to a packed London concert hall, the Hammersmith Apollo on March 16, 2006. Surprising because the translation of teeny-bop pop to a cross between {The Vogues} leaning deep into country (almost {Ozark Mountain Daredevils} territory...well, maybe not that adventurous...), is smooth as silk and an interesting study on how to successfully alter the original bubble gum hit recordings to fit the careers of men in their forties and fifties.

There's {Merrill Osmond} looking very much like {Kenny Rogers}, little {Jimmy Osmond} all grown up and now an important component of a group that started four years before he was born, Wayne slinging a guitar and Jay letting drummer {Steve Mason} take a break so he can imitate {Donny Brewer} of {Grand Funk} - no lie! - on a fun rendition of {"Some Kind Of Wonderful"}. It's followed by {"My Drum"} and a very credible drum solo, the musical fellows certainly knowing how to please their audience. They do all ten of their Top 40 hits without touching the 25 chart songs from Donny or Marie, even ignoring Little Jimmy's lone American hit, {"Long Haired Love From Liverpool"}, from 1972. They could have gone the {Ray Davies} "storyteller" route and included some of those less-known numbers, and that's what makes the show a real paradox, but as mentioned, the hybrid of rock/country/middle of the road reinvention of their sugary 70s hits translates very well to this older audience. The show opens like a major concert from some hard rocking entity ready for the Ozzfest, until you see four grown men doing choreography that would be silly for any group other than ...{The Osmonds}. For fans of this ensemble which started in the fifties when Alan was but ten and the rest younger (or, as stated, not born yet), the transition is pretty stunning. These guys are pros, very musical, and can sing better than most. Covers of {The Temptations}' {"I Can't Get Next To You"} and {The Eagles} {"Heartache Tonight"} are ...well..countrified.

A very touching {"He Ain't Heavy He's My Brother"} reunites the 2006 quartet with founding member {Alan Osmond} who puts down his cane to blend in beautifully on a rendition as moving as {The Hollies}. Following it with a rocking {"Crazy Horses"} complete with {Kiss} fireworks, and the boys picking up instruments, well, the material all

ages very well...sounding more musical than it ever did as the quasi-pop confections that rock and roll fans found so annoying on hit radio. There's an interesting interview with the boys, fan footage, a 3 page biography insert booklet from {Lesley Hawkins} and a photo gallery to go along with the lengthy concert.

This collection is on the {Music Video Distributors} imprint, recorded and released in 2006. A DVD from "back in the day" was unleashed simultaneously in 2006 on {Eagle Vision} with some of the same material, which enables hardcore fans to do the before and after thing...y'know, dark hair/grey hair, youthful voices vs. established and distinguished.