



707 GREATEST HITS LIVE

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Recorded in Hollywood on Valentines day, 1981, {707} open the set up with {"Live With The Girl"}, which could be {Deep Purple}'s {"Highway Star"} gone pop. {"Feel This Way"} follows with the same {Cars}-ish thumpa thumpa riff and 80's high-end vocal setting the stage for what is found throughout this close to forty-six minute concert CD. It's a spirited romp through music that {38 Special} and {Loverboy} embraced - think {Crowded House} with less creativity

-but a serious enough approach. That these fellows are almost as forgotten as late seventies rockers {Whiteface} (or the even more obscure group {White Witch} from the earlier 70's) makes this release all the more appealing. It's nice to know someone cares about the music they made! Even when a {Beatle}-esque piano opens a tune like {"Rockin' is Easy"} with its {Utopia}/{Todd Rundgren} chorus, it is still solidly locked in a time warp and can't help remain an exhibit solely for those who enjoy these dated sounds. Three songs are from the group's self-titled first {Casablanca} album from 1980, six are from 1981's aptly named {The Second Album}. There's an 8 page booklet with photos (including three of the guys with TV host {Mike Douglas} back in the day, liner notes from guitarist/vocalist {Kevin Russell} and a sincerity that is felt in the packaging as well as the performance. It's the Russell, {Phil Bryant}, {Jim McClarty} core with keyboard player {Tod Howarth} that is on fire here, the guitar histrionics in {"Pressure Rise"} as essential as the rave-up vibe on {"Tonight's Your Nite"}. For the followers of the style of music here - and there still are many - the rock and roll on {707}'s {Greatest Hits Live} (the title is the same for a variety of artists on the {GB Music} imprint including {Starz} and {New England} the group) is a good representation and should satisfy, although they only had one true FM hit and never cracked the Billboard Top 40. A video of the {Midnight Special} performance of {"I Could Be Good For You"}, recorded in 1981, the same year as this concert, is floating around on the internet, many people on YouTube comparing the group visually to {Spinal Tap}. The sound is far more serious than that and the drummer from the band {New England}, {Hirsh Gardner}, lends a hand with the mastering and post-production. Indeed, {Kevin Russell}'s two solo compositions that close out the disc - {"Tonight's Your Nite"} and {"You Who Needs To Know"} - are up there with the group's {McClarty} and {McFadden} hit and could have been written by {New England}'s {John Fannon} himself. Which means, had {707} been

given the opportunity to explore and mature beyond their handful of discs, who knows what might have developed.