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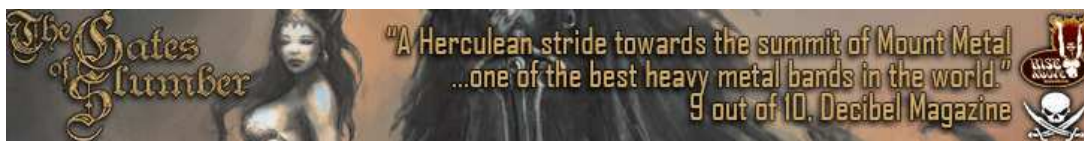
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"Nick Oliveri - Death Acoustic"



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Nick Oliveri - *Death Acoustic*
Review by JJ Koczan (StonerRock.com)
Impedance Records
Release date: October 6, 2009

Whether it was his screams, on-stage nudity or actual bass playing, what Nick Oliveri has always brought to his bands - Kyuss, Queens of the Stone Age, Mondo Generator, Moistboyz, and The Dwarves, among others - is intensity. Indeed it's an intensity much missed from Queens of the Stone Age since his 2004 departure from the band, and an intensity carried over even unto his solo full-length debut, *Death Acoustic* on Impedance Records. Although it's mostly covers, the immediacy in Oliveri's performances of these songs is organic and undeniable.

It's a neat half-hour set, and since it kicks off with Raw Power's "Start a Fight" and ends with "Outlaw Scumfuc" by G.G. Allin, you know it isn't going to be your typical sensitive singer-songwriter fare. Oliveri's solo punk aesthetic manages to keep a sense of anger and spontaneity while being grown up and drugged out at the same time. His composition, "Invisible Like the Sky," is stylized like "Six Shooter" and every bit as tense, and his version of The Dwarves' "Dairy Queen," highlights the fuck-all attitude that is so much a part of that band while giving the song a shot of class (all things relative).

"Dairy Queen" leads into "I'm Gonna Leave You," which originally appeared on Queens of the Stone Age's *Songs for the Deaf*. There's something about the figure of Oliveri that projects an underlying grief, covered mostly with anger, and "I'm Gonna Leave You" brings out that regret (he goes by the name Rex Everything when contributing to The Dwarves, and I've always thought that was kind of sad). His only prior acoustic solo output was on a split with himself in the form of Mondo Generator, and there he did QOTSA's "Autopilot" to similar effect. By contrast, "Love Has Passed Me By" feels like a gimme for Kyuss fans who've followed him since his days playing bass for the seminal desert rockers, the track coming from 1991's *Wretch* LP and a welcome and somewhat unexpected addition to the set.

That's the second time I've referred to the track list of *Death Acoustic* as a "set," and yes, that is on purpose, since most of what Oliveri has done with his acoustic side is perform live and it's easy to imagine him doing so with these songs, in this order. "U Blow" by Moistboyz returns to an angry feel, and Misfits' "Hybrid Moments," played more melodically but keeping in mind the swing and swagger of the legendary punkers, is the absolute high point of the record. You instantly want to sing along, and as Oliveri continues with his own "Unless I Can Kill" from Mondo Generator's *Cocaine Rodeo*, we are reminded not only of his heavier side, but that intensity again as well. The song is complete at 1:57.

The Dwarves come back in the form of the catchy "Follow Me" and "Outlaw Scumfuc" is, well, about all you could do with G.G. Allin in an acoustic context, and a song fitting Oliveri's outward persona. Short as it is, *Death Acoustic* is definitely for those already devoted to his work, but on the record, Nick Oliveri gives a showing that will be welcome to those who perhaps have been lamenting the fact that they're on the other side of the country from his solo gigs. "Outlaw Scumfuc" in particular sounds like it's coming through a blown-out club P.A. and to that end, it works perfectly to cap off the album. It's intimate without being edgeless and raucous without being over-the-top. Certainly worse ways to spend half an hour of your life.

URL: <http://www.myspace.com/nickoliveri>

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