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MARCH 29, 2012

## COOL SH\*T

### Michael Schenker Concert Review



Michael Schenker Group  
Canyon Club—Agoura Hills  
March 23, 2012

In the pantheon of influential rock guitarists, Michael Schenker ranks among the likes of Jimi Hendrix, Jimmy Page, Eddie Van Halen, and Angus Young; and for good reason: he is quite simply one of the most naturally gifted guitar players of our time. Schenker's span of influence, particularly during his 70's era tenure with UFO, is certainly something of legend. Members of Def Leppard, Iron Maiden, Metallica, Megadeth, Guns N' Roses, and Pearl Jam (Mike McCready fronts a UFO cover band called Flight to Mars!) have famously gone on record citing Schenker's huge influence on their careers.

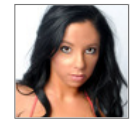
On March 23rd, at the Canyon Club in Agoura Hills, the enigmatic "guitar god" took the stage looking lean and fit with a reignited fire in his eyes—after some notorious ups and downs throughout his career, the confidence was back! Schenker possessed the same natural stage prowess and magnetism that had elevated him in UFO. No matter what the other band members were doing, one could not veer their eyes away from the spotlight of Schenker and his Flying V guitar. And when the "Mad Axeman" took to his signature stance, resting the Flying V on his right leg, fingers an effortless blur....rock n' roll magic. And with a wry smile belying his quiet confidence--Schenker knew it too!

Michael Schenker's most recent release, Temple of Rock, features over a dozen guest artists and former collaborators including: Rudolf Schenker, Herman Rarebell,

Pete Way, Paul Raymond, Carmine Appice, and Robin McCauley. The Temple of Rock tour is structured much the same way, with each leg offering a different cast of supporting players and singers. For the Canyon Club show, McCauley got the call for lead vocals. Another twist: unlike many early Schenker tours where the focus was mainly on MSG material, with a token UFO song thrown in for an encore, this tour boasts a well-crafted setlist of MSG, Scorpions, and UFO (a natural outgrowth of Temple of Rock's varied collaborative efforts), showcasing Schenker's incredibly rich catalog. Performing for about an hour and a half, Schenker played only "Lover's Sinfony" off his new album (the lone track featuring McCauley), along with a few other MSG standards such as, "Into the Arena," "Armed and Ready," and "Let Sleeping Dogs Lie." But the show's obvious highlights were the Scorpions' classics, "Another Piece of Meat," and "Lovedrive," which he helped write and perform for the band in 1979, and the eight UFO songs that closed out the set! For the second half of the evening, fans were basically treated to an abbreviated version of UFO's "Strangers In The Night," (arguably rock's greatest live record) with Schenker recreating the perfection of: "Shoot Shoot," "Too Hot To Handle," "Let It Roll," "Natural Thing," and "Light's Out," along with the genre-defining "Rock Bottom," and "Doctor Doctor," and the absolutely immaculate "Love to Love."

Michael Schenker has reemerged on this tour healthy, fit, and in great spirits. At the Canyon Club, the positive energy and attitude translated extremely well through his music and stage presence. And with the embrace of his career-spanning setlist....he's definitely treating fans as well as he appears to be treating himself.

Review and Photos by:  
Dave Kaplan  
KLOS 95.5 Staff

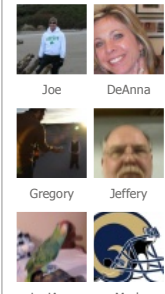


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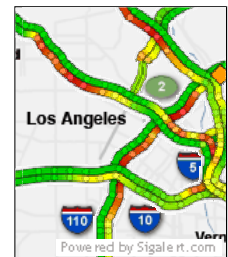
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