

# CHAMBERS OF ROCK

A blog dedicated to coverage of rock news, reviews of CD's/DVD's, live gigs and interviews with musicians who have made rock music great! Coverage of hard rock, classic rock, AOR and popular melodic rock music across the genre. This blog is the creation of Alun Williams, a Brit now living in Michigan whose previous credits include writing for the following sites: [www.classicrock.about.com](http://www.classicrock.about.com) [www.classicrockrevisited.com](http://www.classicrockrevisited.com) and [www.rocknrolluniverse.com](http://www.rocknrolluniverse.com) (Now gone) I hope you enjoy your visit here!

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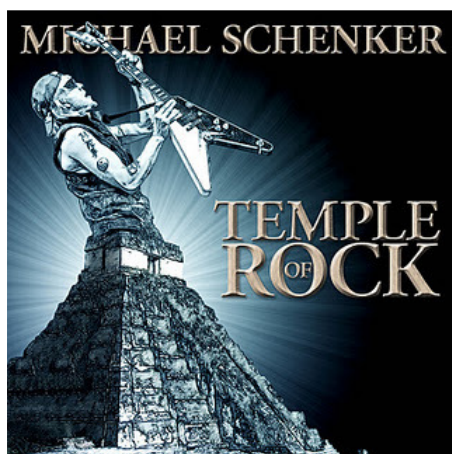
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## Michael Schenker – Temple of Rock album review

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Site regulars will know by now, that I am quite an admirer of the guitar playing of one [Michael Schenker!](#) Ever since 1978 and first hearing *'Only You Can Rock Me,'* I was sold! The album *'Obsession'* soon followed and the rest was history, I have *UFO* this and *UFO* that and plenty of *Schenker's* side stuff too, er of course including the *M.S.G.* stuff, but that goes without saying!

So, a new album from the former *Scorpion / UFO* lead player, released simply as *Michael Schenker*, NOT *M.S.G.*

This is clearly a special album, as the cast of characters here is long!

*Mr. Schenker* has opted for *Michael Voss* for the majority of the lead vocals here, surprisingly perhaps there's nothing here sung by *Gary Barden?* Surprising because to my knowledge there's been no official announcement of *M.S.G.* being over and done and also on here are the other players from the last *M.S.G.* release, *'In The Midst of Beauty.'*

Interesting because after that *M.S.G.* release there was the *Schenker / Barden* acoustic release *'Gipsy Lady'* that was co-produced by *Schenker* with one ..., *Michael Voss!*

The other players on here are ..., deep breath, *Herman Rarebell* (Drums), *Pete Way* (Bass), *Wayne Findlay* (Keys), *Rudolf Schenker*, *Leslie West*, *Michael Amott* (Guitars), *Robin McAuley*, *Doogie White* (Vocals), *Don Airey*, *Paul Raymond* (Keys), *Chris Glen*, *Neil Murray*, *Elliott 'Dean' Rubinson* (bass), *Carmice Appice*, *Simon Phillips*, *Chris Slade* and *Brian Tichy* (Drums), phew!

Not bad eh? Oh yeah and I almost forgot, there's a spoken intro at the start from *Star Trek* legend *William Shatner!*  
Dramatic!

The first music here is *'How Long'* and I wonder if during the *'... Midst of Beauty'* sessions, *'that'* the band / line up didn't record some material with *Michael Voss* and the reason I say that is because *'How Long'* sounds very like *'that'* era overall sound.

It's a good rocker, just seems a little strange to hear *Voss'* voice present here.

*'Fallen Angel'* next kicks in pretty good and is very reminiscent at times of classic *MSG*, with very catchy

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chorus indeed and this one features *Rarebell* and *Way* joining Messrs *Schenker* and *Voss*. I like it.

We have more than half the classic *UFO* line up on *'Hanging On'* next, with *Schenker* joined by *Way* and *Paul Raymond*, as well as two *Scorpions* guys in *Rarebell* and *Rudy Schenker!*  
It's an interesting track that rocks in a not dissimilar style to *Grand Funk's 'We're An American Band'* – Go on, tell me you don't hear it?! – but some nice work from *Schenker*, but not too challenging really for *Voss* and perhaps you'll see what I mean when you hear it.  
It's OK, but seems a little repetitive at times.

By contrast, I love next track, *'End of an Era,'* it rocks like a good 'un and seems so alive, lots to it and here the additional players are *Carmine Appice, Don Airey* and *Elliot 'Dean' Rubinson*. I really do love this, it's got some great solo work and power chords from *Schenker* and *Airey's Hammond B3* really help it rock with the best of them.

*'Miss Claustrophobia'* next has an interesting intro part from *Schenker* and the riff sounds off, but after a few plays you kind of get used to it.

This track - I believe - has been the most plugged by media sources and it does have a certain something about it. It's certainly rocking and the chorus is strong, it's just that riff that *Schenker* repeats here and there that's a little hard to get used to.

Long time *M.S.G.* player *Wayne Findlay* adds some appropriate *Hammond* and more here, joined by *Rarebell* and *Way* as the rhythm section.

Ballad time next in the shape of *'With You'* and it's OK, but it doesn't grab me as many other *Schenker* ballads have done in the past.

This one also features the same 'strong' line up that played on *'Hanging On'* and isn't that a little strange as to be honest, they are my least favourite tracks here. They're not bad, just not so strong.

A very *Ronnie James Dio* like vocal from *Doogie White* next on, *'Before The Devil Knows You're Dead.'* Overall, the track is very reminiscent of say *Rainbow* and *Dio* and I really like this one too. *Brian Tichy* adds drums, *Rubinson* the bass and *Findlay* on keys here. Nice one guys!

*'Storming In'* starts with a haunting female vocal wail, before the rock kicks in with a new rhythm section featuring *Chris Slade* on drums, *Chris Glen* on bass and with this track, the way the vocal is presented it comes across a little off, not bad, but the key chosen seems strange.

It's a powerful track, no question about it, it rocks out for sure ... There's just something ...

In *'Scene of Crime'* there's mystic sound to it and it's actually a dark moody rocker, which surprisingly also includes *Michael Schenker* doing backing vocals and some flute no less! Interesting one this for sure ...

*'Saturday Night'* next, is a video and track that you may well have heard already, as this was being plugged earlier this year, through *You Tube*, under the band title of *Strangers in the Night*. Featuring the rhythm section of *Rarebell* and *Way*, alongside *Schenker* and *Voss*, the track opens with some (pre) recorded live audience cheering and I have to say, when I first heard this track, I was buzzed about what an album we had to look forward to ... Don't get me wrong, there's a lot I like here and of course, it's *Michael Schenker* too, but it's not everything I'd hoped for.

Have to say, next track *'Lover's Sinfony,'* is another goody to me, featuring *Robin McAuley* on lead vocals, with *Rarebell, Way* and *Findlay* joining *Schenker* in the supporting cast.

Great to hear newly recorded material from *McAuley* - Wish there was more! - while his current ride *Survivor* seems to be sitting in limbo.

*Schenker* sounds great here too, a really, really good track to me, reminds me a little of UK rockers *Thunder* at times actually.

*Michael*, pull *Robin* back in the band, it could do you good!

*'Speed'* next starts with a racetrack intro piece, before giving us a riff not unlike *UFO's 'Natural Thing.'*

It's a chug along, mid paced rocker generally featuring the rhythm section of *Glen* and *Slade* and *Michael Voss* back to lead vocalist spot.

To close the album, we get another version of *'How Long'* that rocks perhaps a little more and features two more guest guitar players for the 'guitar battle,' in *Michael Amott* and *Leslie West*, but otherwise it does seem a little pointless, sorry, to me it just does.

In summary of this album, *Michael Voss* holds himself pretty well to be honest, took a little getting used to initially and *Schenker* is soloing well, but I do think that some of the songwriting and song structures here, are just a little behind *'... Midst of Beauty,'* but then other songs are perhaps stronger than *'... Beauty,'* so it's gets an equal rating from me, wish I could've given it more but for me it needed a little more ...

Rating: 3.5 out of 5

Official artist website:

<http://www.michaelschenkerhimself.com>

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