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Michael Schenker

Temple of Rock

Review by G. W. Hill



The newest release from Michael Schenker, this is quite a strong one. Since Pete Way is included in the lineup, comparisons to UFO are obvious. This rocks out a bit harder than a lot of UFO and has some sections that are more guitar solo oriented and less "song" oriented than a lot of UFO music. Of course, these songs are far from excuses for Schenker to solo. They are real songs. The only piece that could be accused of favoring solo over the song is the closer, and that's because it features a three-way guitar soloing showdown between Schenker, Leslie West and Michael Amott. Of course, in addition to the comparisons to UFO, the Scorpions deserve mention, too. Former Scorpions drummer Herman Rarebell plays on the disc, along with guest appearance by Schenker's brother Rudolf. Other guests include Doogie White. All in all this disc should please long time Schenker fans, while perhaps earning him some new ones.

Track by Track Review

Intro



This cool intro piece features a spoken vocal from William Shatner that seems to be slowed down a bit.

How Long

A smoking hot rocker, this is a killer tune. The guitar riffing is killer and the vocals are strong.

Fallen Angel

This one feels like something from a 1970s pop rock band with some serious crunch added to the mix. It's very accessible. The guitar soloing on this is especially cool.

Hanging On

There's not a big change to this song, but there's a killer melodic instrumental section later in the track.

The End Of An Era

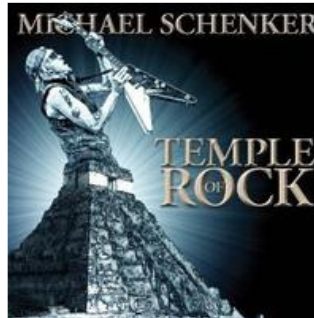
We get a meatier jam that certainly fits as heavy metal. It's a real screamer. The keyboard solo later makes it feel a bit like Deep Purple.

Miss Claustrophobia

Here's a cut that's even more metallic. It's another strong tune. It starts with an introduction that reminds me both of cartoon music and world music. It launches out from there into pure heavy metal. There's some killer guitar soloing and more of those awesome retro keyboard sounds.

With You

There's a rather bluesy jam that opens this. It turns out to a rather psychedelic sort of sound from there as it works into the song proper.



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Before the Devil Knows You're Dead

There's a symphonic presence to this track and it feels a lot like European epic metal with some healthy dosages of Rainbow.

Storming In

Female vocals open this. Then we get a little acoustic guitar driven movement that holds it til it fires out for more metallic sounds. It's another scorching hot tune. They take it into an intricate little section mid-track, but then turn it even more metallic from there.

Scene of Crime

There's a fast paced rock sort of motif mixed with something more metallic. In a lot of ways this is another song that rather calls to mind Deep Purple.

Saturday Night

Here's another with a definite hard rocking pop music element. It's catchy and a bit like Schenker does Cheap Trick or Enuff Z'Nuff.

Lover's Sinfony

Here's a more metallic number. It's another killer rocker. The chorus, though, has more of a straight rock and less metal sound. The guitar solo feels closer to the kind of music Joe Satriani or Steve Vai might do.

Speed

Here's a straight-forward rocker that has a lot of 1980s metal along with more modern epic metal built into it.

How Long (3 Generations Guitar Battle Version)

Here's another straight ahead rocker. It's nowhere near redundant or predictable, it's just not that different from a lot of the other music in terms of general musical stylings.



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