



October 13, 2011

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### Schenker, Michael: Temple of Rock

As a Michael Schenker fan for as long as I can remember, I really, really wanted to be knocked over and fall head over heels for *Temple of Rock*. Let's face it, Schenker fans really haven't had a lot to be happy about in a long time, as the guitar god's studio output the last 20 years has been spotty at best, and with his problems with addiction we also couldn't count on stellar live appearances either for quite some time. All indications are that Schenker has successfully battled his demons, and the recent MSG anniversary tour proved he still had what it takes to reclaim his position in the hard rock/heavy metal guitar Hall of Fame. So, how does his latest opus *Temple of Rock* fare?



Well, let's start with the line-up, which includes vocalist Michael Voss, former Scorpions drummer Herman Rarebell, UFO bassist Pete Way, and longtime Schenker keyboard player Wayne Findlay. Guest on the album include Robin McAuley, Doogie White, Rudolf Schenker, Michael Amott, Leslie West, Don Airey, Paul Raymond, Chris Glen, Neil Murray, Elliott Robertson, Carmind Appice, Simon Phillips, Chris Slade, and Brian Tichy, so as you can see, it's a star studded affair of Schenker alumni past & present. The man himself is in fine form throughout, as can be expected, with his crunchy riffs and sinewy solos running rampant all over *Temple of Rock*. Highlights include the heavy "The End of An Era", the catchy yet hard rocking "How Long", the grinding yet symphonic "Before the Devil Knows You're Dead" (with a great lead vocal from Doogie White), and the headbanging moden metal of "Scene of the Crime". McAuley puts in a great vocal performance on "Lover's Sinfony", a real throwback to some of the material on the few McAuley

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Schenker Group albums. There's an extended version of "How Long" featuring what is billed as a '3 generations Guitar Battle' between Schenker, Leslie West, and Michael Amott, which provides for some guitar hero moments but is somewhat anti-climactic.

The real downfall here are the vocals of Voss. He has a very strong voice, but the problem is he sounds so much in the school of Brett Michaels/Jon Bon Jovi that it makes for a strange clash with the more heavy rock style of Schenker. Some of these songs have a classic metal feel, but then when Voss comes in it takes you right down late 80's hair metal avenue. No disrespect to Voss, he's a fine singer, but he just sticks out like a sore thumb here at times. A couple of these tunes, like "Fallen Angel", "Hanging On", and "Speed" sound more like Poison songs that anything Michael Schenker would be involved with.

So, if you are looking for ripping Schenker solos, there are plenty to be found here on *Temple of Rock*. If you don't mind material that is heavily steeped in 80's commercial hard rock/hair metal, then chances are you'll have a good time with this CD, but if the thought of that scares you, then proceed with caution.

#### Track Listing

01. Intro
02. How Long
03. The End Of An Era
04. Saturday Night
05. Fallen Angel
06. Hangin' On
07. With You
08. Miss Claustrophobia
09. Scene Of Crime
10. Lovers Sinfony-Speed
11. Stormin' In
12. Speed
13. Before The Devil Knows You're Dead
14. How Long (guitar battle version)

**Added:** October 1st 2011

**Reviewer:** **Pete Pardo**

**Score:** ★★☆☆

**Related Link:** **Artist Website**

**Hits:** 347

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