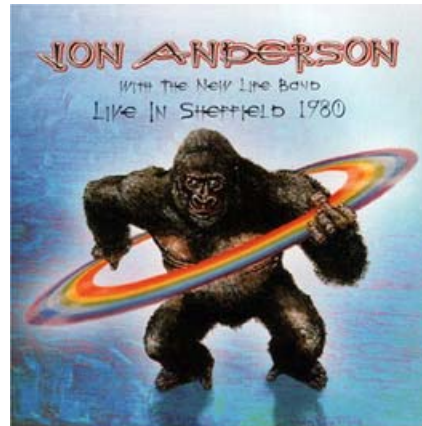




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Jon Anderson – Live in Sheffield 1980



By Gary Hill

Overall Review

This is part of a series of Jon Anderson releases that originated as bootlegs or forgotten demos, outtakes and the like. In this instance, the first half (OK, actually a bit more) of the set is a bootleg live show from 1980. As bootlegs go, once it gets past the first track, the sound is not bad. You won't find yourself wondering if it's a boot, but on the other hand, you won't be tempted to shut it off because of the poor recording. The choice of material is a great cross section of material from *Song of Seven*, Yes songs and Jon and Vangelis. It would have been nice to get something from *Olias of Sunhollow*, but perhaps that's asking too much. Truly, there are some magical moments here and slices of live performances that, even taken by themselves, make this collection a worthwhile addition to any Jon Anderson (or Yes for that matter) fan's collection. While I'd love to have a better recording of this show, I'd have to mark this set as a "must have." If the full concert wasn't enough, we even get a whole batch of tour rehearsals included here. Of all these rarities releases, this is the best for my money.

Track by Track Review

Disc 1

Some Are Born: I've always loved this track. It's sort of a bouncy, folky piece of music. The recording here feels a bit flat and slightly distorted, but Anderson's voice is clear and potent. It turns more jazz oriented for a time later and then a bit of a Yes-like excursion takes it before they

move back to the opening segments to take it to the outro. This is a fun song and a great way to start things off. The closing section with its layers of voices moving in all directions is especially cool.

Don't Forget (Nostalgia): The old time rock and roll groove of this one works pretty well here. The recording suffers a bit less from the “bootleg” nature of its origins. The soaring segment is quite strong.

Funk Theme: As you might imagine, this is a killer funk jam. Something that we’re not used to hearing from Anderson, this is one of a few tracks that truly make this disc worth having all by themselves. This thing really grooves, although Anderson himself makes few appearances. It’s a fine example of just how good this band was. You can almost hear some Yesisms and pure jazz amongst this rocker.

To Be Over: Seeming to come out of the last track, here we get a gentle rendition of the song from Yes’ *Relayer* album. By this point the bootleg quality of the disc seems to be pretty well stabilized. The first segment of this is similar to the original but with a greater emphasis on multiple singing voices. They fire up to the harder edged jam in great style – not duplicating Yes, but rather re-envisioning it. This shifts directly into the next cut.

Perpetual Change: Here the band comes closer to a full Yes approach. This rocks out quite well, the group running through the snippet instrumentally.

The Prophet: Speaking of those “worth the price of admission” moments, here’s the next one. This early Yes track is one that has few to no live recordings floating about. It’s great to get to hear this one again and with a live vibe. The group put in a killer rendition and if this were the only such song on here, I’d pay pretty much any price to have this disc.

Long Distance Runaround: Staying in Yes territory, they launch into this classic. The addition of saxophone is cool and I particularly like the sax solo. They spin this out later into a killer funk, meets jazz, meets Yes excursion that eventually gives way to the next tune.

Wonderous Stories: Another classic Yes song, we get a great rendition here. In some ways, this doesn’t differ far from the original. There are a few issues with the mix on this recording, but it’s a beautiful performance. The keyboard solo is where the song does shift away from the tried and true, though – mostly due to the differing voicings. Speaking of voices, as they wind it down, varying singers swirl their sounds around one another in fine fashion. We also get a gentle flute solo section at the close.

Rejoice: The *Tormato* song is presented here with a bit of funky element and some saxophone for good measure. This is another of those “must have” tracks, since it’s a seldom performed Yes song. The instrumental movement after the “round and round and round and round” section is extremely strong.

I've Seen All Good People: Another Yes classic, this one is preformed pretty true to the original here. It’s a great performance and the recording fares better than some of the stuff here. The fast paced segment includes some more of that saxophone soloing. Hmmmm – wonder why Yes never added a saxophone player. In all honest, the sax brings in a cool new dimension and is a nice touch.

The Revealing Science of God: This one, with the more jazzy arrangement is quite intriguing. I wouldn’t say that I definitely like it better than the original recording, but it’s certainly a contender. Of course, we only get a minute and a half of the piece.

All Good People (Reprise): They launch back out into more of “...All Good People” from there, essentially using “The Revealing Science...” as an interlude.

The Remembering: Here we get a short (just over a minute) rendition of one of the more balladic movements of “The Remembering.” It’s pretty, but definitely brief. The last half is keyboard solo.

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Ritual: Continuing with *Tales From Topographic Oceans*, we’re in the balladic modes of “Ritual,” the “Nous Sommes Du Soleil” segment. In all honesty, that’s one of my favorite sections of the whole double disc set and this is a very powerful rendition. It’s another one of those moments that is worth the price of admission. As they power this out into the more hard rocking variation, the sound quality takes a slight downturn, but the band also turn hot. Saxophone is punctuated with Anderson’s “Nous Sommes Du Soleil” here and there. It’s an extremely cool rethinking of the piece.

Far Away in Baagad: After a musical flourish, Anderson comes in a capella on this Jon and Vangelis track. When the band kicks in this doesn’t really feel like the original. It’s definitely harder edged and quite cool. It’s an interesting twist on a familiar piece of music.

I Hear You Now: Another from Jon and Vangelis, this is much closer to the source material. With its gentle electronic format, it’s a great way to change up the flow of the show. The saxophone brings in the smooth jazz feeling.

One More Time: At the conclusion of the last piece and the opening of this one the bootleg nature, in the form of tape hiss/hum, is very noticeable. This is another Jon and Vangelis song and it’s very restful and beautiful. I’ve always loved the emotional delivery of Anderson’s vocals on this and that aspect is definitely strong here. The flute skirting about the arrangement is a nice touch.

Everyday: They throw in a screaming rock and roll rendition of a Buddy Holly tune here. This is a real scorcher.

Hear It: Starting with acoustic guitar in an almost blues ballad approach, it shifts out to the familiar refrain after this introduction. This is another personal favorite and they put in a great rendition.

Song of Seven: One of my all time favorite Jon Anderson pieces, this epic is sheer brilliance. It’s another of the tracks here that is simply a must have. I’ve reviewed the composition in detail in terms of its construction in my review of *Song of Seven*. I’m going to direct you [there](#) for that because this is one of the hardest tracks for me to review. That’s not because of complicated changes or indescribable musical elements. Instead, it’s because it’s so hard to not get caught up in it and lose track of what you are doing. This is such a wonderfully emotional and powerful ride that it’s better to just buckle in and enjoy. I remember for years just listening to that one song over and over again whenever I played *Song of Seven* – yes, it’s that good. The group put in a suitably powerful rendition here and it leaves me in heaven to have a live recording of this track.

Disc 2

Petrushka: This instrumental finds the band putting in a rocking version of Stravinsky. It starts more classically, but then shifts out to something akin to an ELP take on a classical piece. They even twist into some smoking jazz at points. Dynamic and powerful, this thing really rocks.

Tour Song/Introductions: A tradition that Yes has usually followed is the “tour song.” It’s a little piece of music specific to that tour – and not on any album. Anderson continues that tradition with this funky jam. It’s a killer and Anderson, as he does on Yes tours, gives his thanks out to the crowd. He also uses it to introduce the band here.

Heart Of the Matter: This number gets a smoking fun treatment here. Always bouncy, this is a nice piece live. The recording here suffers just a bit from the recording quality.

Band Jam: As you might guess, this is what it says it is a little jam for the band to go off on. Anderson gets everyone to their feet and clapping during this one. To quote Marty McFly, "it's a rocking little number."

All Good People: Here we get another take of “All Good People.” Anderson and company get the audience to join them on this. Other than the sax solo, this rocking section of the piece really feels like Yes. That sax wails and adds a lot here. The whole thing makes for an extremely energetic end to a killer show.

Tour Rehearsals

For You For Me: This track wasn’t included in the concert part of the show. That’s a shame because I’ve always liked it a lot. I’ve noticed that many times audience recordings don’t have the opening track – probably due to difficulties in recording unnoticed at the onset of a concert. That might be what happened here and the group might have opened with this one. I really enjoy this slightly rough recording of this killer piece. It’s another of the songs that make this set so much of a “must have.”

Some Are Born: Here we get the rehearsal version of the earlier track. The recording here is quite good, even if it feels a bit distant and flat.

Don't Forget (Nostalgia): I have a hunch that through here I’m going to become a broken record – uh oh, showing my age there – a CD that keeps jumping back to the same spot. Here we have another rehearsal rendition. As with the previous number, in some ways this recording is superior to the concert one, but in others it suffers a bit.

Everybody Loves You: Of course, the inclusion of this track here, and not on the first set, kind of throws my theory of what happened with “For You For Me” out. Well, I’m sticking to it because that one would be such a strong opener. Perhaps this was actually the second song of their set and didn’t get recorded – or maybe I’m completely off beat on this theory. In any event, this is a killer piece of music. On the one hand it’s a pretty standard pop song, but then again it’s got a lot

of intriguing jazzy prog built into it. The contrast and dynamic texture, along with the emotion and beautiful melodies, make this a great number. It's another reason why this is such a great addition to the collection, too.

To Be Over: I'd have to say that the better recording quality on this rendition really works well to bring out the inherent beauty of the earlier sections. I think I prefer this over the concert take.

Perpetual Change: Here I am as the stuck CD/broken record. We get this smoking rendition here in the rehearsal motif.

The Prophet: As cool as it is to have an alternate take on this vintage Yes track, two versions are even better. This doesn't differ much from the one on the concert disc, but who cares? It's just reason number two for having this package.

Long Distance Runaround: Well, here is another alternate take. The sound on this gets a little muddled, making the live one superior.

Wonderous Stories: Should I just say, "ditto?" We have another rehearsal rendition here.

Rejoice: The sound on this one is definitely better than on the concert recording. That is a great thing and a good reason to chalk this onto the ever growing list of "must haves" on this set.

I've Seen All Good People: I'd have to chalk this one up as another where I prefer it over the recording on the first set.

The Revealing Science Of God: This one probably would be another in the "better version" category. It rocks out quite well and the recording is still not "studio quality," but quite good.

All Good People (Reprise): This screamer is probably on about an equal par as the concert take.

The Remembering: Here's another where I prefer the recording on this second disc. It's always a beautiful song and works quite well here, although it's only forty five seconds.

Ritual: This one is killer here. It's another of those where I'm very glad they included two versions.



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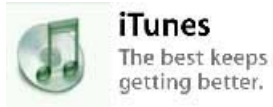
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