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## Ian Hunter

### Strings Attached (A Very Special Night With)

Review by G. W. Hill

This concert recording is from 2002. It features Ian Hunter with an orchestra. It's a great live album capturing a unique talent. Hunter is a great song writer and his music has a certain universal quality. It really speaks to the listener. This live album is well worth having for any Hunter fan. Whether you first got into Hunter's music during the Mott the Hoople days or later, this is essential.

#### Track by Track Review

##### Disc 1

###### Rest In Peace

After a spoken introduction, delicate classical music opens this piece. This holds it for the first minute and a half or so. Then a gentle musical backdrop emerges for Ian Hunter's vocal. This is a mellow song for the most part. It does get more powered up later. The vocal arrangement is what really sells this cut, but the strings do augment it at times.

###### All of the Good Ones Are Taken

While there seems to be a bit of an Island vibe to some of the music here, the vocals are pure British. This mellow rocker has a lot of style and charm.

###### I Wish I Was Your Mother

This one includes some harmonica. It's got a fairly slow groove to it and is a folksy kind of number in a lot of ways. The chorus is more powered up and the cut does have a good amount of energy to it.

###### Twisted Steel

Much more of a rocker, this is about 9-11. It's got a folk music vibe, but a melodic rock treatment. It's arguably the catchiest number to this point.

###### Boy

Parts of this are set in a British theatrical music kind of sound. Other parts rock out in a really powerful way. There are moments of this that make me think of ELO just a bit.

###### 23A Swan Hill

This is a very British rocker. It's got energy and some hooks. That makes it pretty fun. Some harmonica on this lends some character. There is a bit of a punky vibe to this, too.

###### Waterlow

The strings add a lot to this piece. I love the acoustic guitar solo, too. This is a pretty song that feels a bit melancholy.

###### All the Young Dudes

This is probably the best known song from Hunter's time with Mott the Hoople. There's a full on string arrangement for the start of this. Then it moves into the main song. The chorus on this is so catchy and the Bowie like sound (Bowie wrote the song for them) is great. This is a highlight of the set.

###### Irene Wilde

Very British and very theatrical, this is a good tune.

###### Once Bitten Twice Shy

Here we get a much more rock and roll associated tune. It works well. Perhaps the weirdest thing about this song is that, it's an Ian Hunter tune, but most people probably know of it as Great White since they covered it. I like the original better than that version, though. This has some great hooks and works really well.

##### Disc 2

###### Rollerball

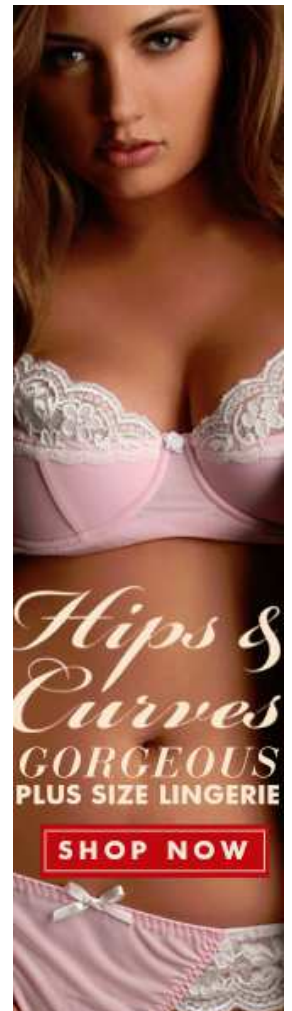
This is the hardest rocker to this point of the set. It's a real killer.

###### Ships

A more balladic number, the strings add a lot to this piece.



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### **A Nightingale Sang In Berkeley Square**

This is an old British romantic song written in the 1930s. The delivery here is a piano and vocal approach with the augmentation of strings at points. It's a good rendition, but not really my kind of thing.

### **Michael Picasso**

The vocal delivery is really the driving force on this tune. It's musically more or less a singer/songwriter ballad. The strings lend some flavor and character along with emphasis. It does get a full on powered up treatment late in the number.

### **Wash Us Away**

The pop rock vibe of this is infectious. So are the hooks. This is a cool little rocking number.

### **Don't Let Go**

Here we get a piano and vocal ballad. This is good, and has some compelling vocal passages. It's just not one of my favorites here.

### **All the Way from Memphis**

This is a smoking hot rocker with some killer guitar soloing. The chorus hooks are very catchy and this is just packed with energy.

### **Roll Away the Stone**

I like the almost electronic vibe to some of this song. It's more or less a balladic number and the vocals are the real selling point on the tune. There is an odd little musical interlude mid-track with a lot of symphonic aspects. The closing section gets a lot more rock built into it.

### **Saturday Gigs**

This is a great rocker that's a lot of fun. The crowd really sings along, making this an excellent way to end the set.

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