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Music DVD Review: Ian Hunter – *Live At Rockpalast* Featuring Mick Ronson

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It's 1980, six years after [Mott the Hoople](#) had disbanded. Former Mott frontman [Ian Hunter](#) and his longtime collaborator, guitarist Mick Ronson, had just released *Welcome to the Club*, primarily a live two-album concert set. In that year, one of the gigs from Hunter and Ronson promoting that record was a 74-minute performance broadcast on Germany's Rockpalast TV program.

Now it's 2012, and that show has been released by Made in Germany Music as part of its "Live at the Rockpalast" DVD series. What this particular disc succeeds at is capturing the stripped-down rock 'n' roll of Hunter and Ronson long before the latter's death in 1993. After all these years, it also demonstrates that while he is deservedly a cult hero, Hunter was essentially the leader of a pretty good opening act in 1980. He can get you warmed up, and then you're ready for a headliner.

Another thing seems clear on this recording: Hunter, Ronson, and company can have fun on stage before an enthusiastic audience. After some extended tuning of their guitars, the band jumps into a setlist drawn directly from *Welcome to the Club*.

As they had for that release, they kick off with a bouncing version of The Shadows' 1961 instrumental hit, "FBI." They draw from the '60s again with Sonny Bono's 1965 "Laugh at Me." Most of the other selections are Hunter originals like "Angeline," with its Dylan-esque harmonica and vocals. Hunter also offers some vintage [Mott the Hoople](#) and solo songs with his typically reflective lyrics such as his U.K. hit "Once Bitten Twice Shy," "Irene Wilde," and 1972's "I Wish I Was Your Mother."

The second half of the show kicks out the jams with “Just Another Night” from *You're Never Alone with a Schizophrenic*. The then-new “We Gotta Get Out of Here” from *Welcome to the Club* introduces a fuller sound for the rest of the songs, with more use of the keyboards on “Bastard,” “All the Way from Memphis,” and one of Hunter’s signature songs, “Cleveland Rocks.”

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