



Kid Creole & the Coconuts: Live at Rockpalast (1982/2012)

Director: Ernst Hoeller

Studio: Made In Germany-Music MIG 90527

Video: 4:3 color

Audio: English PCM stereo

Extras: 8-page insert booklet, 30-second trailers for nine other Rockpalast titles, Interview (11:15)

TrackList: DVD 1: Intro, Turkey Trot, Going Places, I'm a Wonderful Thing, Baby, Mr. Softee, Loving You Made a Fool Out of Me, Ain't You Heard the News, Don't Take My Coconuts, Annie I'm not Your Daddy, No Fish Today, Que Pasa, Table Manners, Dear Addy, Stool Pigeon, Gina Gina, Imitation, Maladie D'Amour

DVD 2: Adnaloy, You Had No Intention, Gina Gina, Mr. Softee, With a Girl like Mimi, Turkey Trot, Que Pasa, Schweinerei, Any Time Is Party Time, Table Manners, I'm a Wonderful Thing, Baby, Ain't You Heard the News, In the Jungle, Don't Take My Coconuts, Stool Pigeon, Latin Music, I Am

Length: DVD 1: 116:56, DVD 2: 115:12

Rating: ****

(August Darnell (alias Kid Creole) – vocals; Adriana Kaegi – backing vocals; Cheryl Poirier – backing vocals; Andy Hernandez (alias Coati Mundi) – vibes, flute, vocals; Mark Mazur – guitar; Miss Carol Colman – bass; Peter Schott – keys; Al Mack – drums; Bongo Eddie – percussion; Ken Fradley – trumpet; Lee Robertson – trombone; Charles Lagond – sax (DVD 1); Alan Ross – sax (DVD 2))

It starts with a three-minute overture, classical music rising through speakers as fog machines drench a rapturous audience with thick smoke; a roving spotlight shifts through the crowd to highlight sweaty faces. A large curtain shutters aside to reveal multicolored lights which barely display smoke-shrouded instruments. The camera gets closer, and band members are seen. As the music crescendos, a slapping reggae beat kicks in via drums, a horn section, bass, guitar and keyboards. A man (percussionist Bongo Eddie, acting as the MC) wearing bright, white Caribbean travel wear enters, and begins a rapping introduction to an unforgettable evening: he sings, over and over: “gotta have a party tonight!” That’s quite a way to commence the upbeat, good times of Kid Creole and the Coconuts.

Kid Creole (aka August Darnell) was one of the most energetic showmen of the 1980s. Instead of relying on then-current new wave textures, synth pop or other dated and/or fading musical artifacts, Creole and his multi-racial and sizeable ensemble mixed disco, calypso, strains of big-band jazz, salsa, reggae, rock and early rap into an infectiously inflammable fusion both unique (then and now) and formidable. Creole’s albums were a musical odyssey but he and his group’s outstanding feature were legendary roadshows full of loosely conceptual music and choreographed moves. Experiencing a Kid Creole stage presentation was life affirming and dance-drenched: think Cab Calloway, James Brown and Tito Puente all rolled into one.

The 2-DVD, Region 0 *Kid Creole & the Coconuts: Live at Rockpalast* (also released separately as a 2-CD package) collects two 1982 shows videotaped for the German *Rockpalast* television program: fans take note, this is the only official live Kid Creole and the Coconuts so far released. The first film contains songs from two October nights at Grughalle Essen, and the second has a slightly different set list from an early June appearance at Cologne’s Satory Halls. On the approximately two-hour first DVD, Darnell’s self-deprecating Creole persona comes out sharply on such braggadocio bits as the European hit single “I’m a Wonderful Thing, Baby,” where Creole pulls out his little black book

and lists everyone from Andrea to Sophie (not to mention his sparkling backing trio, the Coconuts, which included his then-wife Adriana “Addy” Kaegi). Creole’s sidekick, vibes player Andy Hernandez (aka Coati Mundi), teasingly pokes fun at Creole throughout, teasing him about his boastful swaggering, which leads to the double-time, double-entendre “Mr. Softee,” and then the soul-disco strut of “Loving You Made a Fool Out of Me,” (a delirious duet between Creole and Kaegi which puts their relationship through the microscope). The equally outrageous Mundi (who had a brief solo career) takes center stage on his self-aggrandizement number “Ain’t You Heard the News,” where the three-man horn section does extra duty as backing vocalists while also partaking in a quick game of cards: talk about multi-tasking. Theatricality and musical diversity shine through another fan fave, the irresistible, 11-minute “Stool Pigeon,” where bongos, guitar, horns and the Coconuts’ glittery, barely-there costumes heat up the stage. A three-track encore hits a high intensity with the closing cut, an almost 16-minute rendition of the Latinized “Maladie D’Amour,” where the band creates a conga line across the floorboards, including lucky concertgoers (a scene which comically illustrates that not *everyone* can dance).

The combustibility continues on the second, also nearly two-hour DVD. A voodoo-ish musical starter is used as an opener and this time the ensemble simply steps onto the garishly green-lit stage, member by member, and charge into the effervescent remonstrance “You Had No Intention.” Creole proceeds to lay his heart on his khaki sleeve on romance numbers like “Gina Gina” and “With a Girl like Mimi,” and then Coati Mundi gets his spotlight moment with a sweltered swinger, “Que Pasa,” where his flighty flute is nearly inundated beneath the feathery fog machine output. Highpoints comprise the spirited and funky “Table Manners,” where Creole imparts some advice to men pursuing their paramours, and the politically-pinged “In the Jungle,” charged up with an Afro-Cuban foundation and pinpointed by Creole’s lyrics about equality and parity. The Kid and the Coconuts conclude with the two-punch finale of the samba-sautéed “Latin Music” and Mundi’s swirling and slightly silly “I Am,” which turns into an audience sing-along, initially in English and then in German. It is not as fun as a conga line, but it is nonetheless an entertaining ending.

The visuals have been enhanced, reprocessed and carefully restored, but both DVDs still suffer from age. The 1980s-era video camera equipment gives the expected, worn-out saturation which plagues TV productions from the period, but overall the quality is good: a bit of streaking occurs, but there are no apparent scratches or tears. The existing 24-track tapes from the Grughalle concert were also improved to modern audio standards. This means the sound is also above par, although the mix on the second DVD has balancing issues: the bass, in particular, is sometimes overbearing. Also, there is a gap during “Table Manners,” when tapes had to be changed. This was offset in post-production by filling the break with the stereo track from the WDR radio broadcast, but the result can still be noticed if one pays attention. The package has some extra material: there is an eight-page booklet with updated, but brief, liner notes. The first DVD has nine trailers for other Rockpalast titles. The second DVD has an 11-minute interview with various group members which inadvertently becomes an intercontinental farce as the WDR-TV host translates comments from English to German, from German to English, and then attempts to get Adriana’s Swiss answers translated from German to English and then back again. Watching this once is more than enough.

—Doug Simpson

HDtracks.com
The World's Greatest Sounding Downloads!
96kHz/24Bit 192kHz/24bit Master Quality



[Email your Opinions](#) on this article to AUDIOPHILE AUDITION!

[Email this page](#) to a friend. View a [printer-friendly version](#) of the article.

[Ads by Google](#)

[Music Jazz](#)

[Pop Music](#)

[Music Live](#)

[Kid Rock](#)