

FFanzeen: Rock'n'Roll Attitude With Integrity

Through the writings and photography of Robert Barry Francos, a view of the arts and culture, including everyday life.

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DVD Review: 10cc in Concert, 2007

Text by Robert Barry Francos / FFanzeen, 2013
Images from the Internet



10cc in Concert: Featuring Graham Gouldman and Friends

Directed by [not released]

Weinerworld Limited / New Wave Pictures

108 minutes, 2007 / 2013

www.newwavepictures.com

www.MVDVisuals.com

Going into this DVD, I was trying to remember anything at all about 10cc. I knew they were a British pop art band (re: prog) from the first half of the 1970s. In the early '80s, I interviewed Jonathan King, who claims to have given them their name (which I believe, considering what it means). But I don't own a single one of their many records, and off the top of my head, I couldn't think of a single one.

The second song in, there was one with which I was familiar, "The Things We Do For Love." I remember equating it, at the time, with the likes of REO Speedwagon, or some of the other glossy prog pap. Sort of the Brit version of the likes of Toto and the Eagles. This is also

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About Me

Robert Barry Francos

Currently living in Saskatoon (email at RBF55@msn.com for address). From 1977-88, I used to publish a print version of a music magazine in New York called FFanzeen, which dealt with the wide-ranging independent music scene. I also photographed many bands from the period (and since). Now I write this blog, and have a column at jerseybeat (dot) com (slash) quietcorner (dot) html. And the beat goes on.

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shown in another overproduced hit later in the show, "I'm Not in Love."

Let me make this clear, whatever my opinion for the output of the band as a whole, I have incredible respect for their musicianship, their voices per se, and the work they do. However, as a collective, I find them incredibly insipid. That is to say, they make a perfect Top 10 band for their time period. And they have not lost their knack over the years. Sure, most of this is rehashing of material from back when, but if you're a fan of the band (nothing to be ashamed of), this is golden.

The audience reaction alone shows that 10cc is loved, and this reunion tour, filmed in 2007 at Shepherd's Bush Empire (London) and originally released as *Clever Clogs*, is perfectly catered to them. They are a two-pronged – or *progged?* – group, comprised of a couple of songwriting teams. The first is more pop, the other more artsy. Truthfully, I don't know which style I find more *meh*. I've never been a prog fan of any kind, from its nascent form and onward. If I never heard another song by ELP or ELO, I don't feel like I'd be missing, well, anything.

Okay, that being said, I feel a bit gushy about a segment of this where Graham Gouldman covers songs he had written for others, including "Bus Stop" (in my opinion, the best song the Hollies ever did), "No Milk Today" (one of my favorite Herman's Hermits hits that was more popular in the UK than the US), "Look Through Any Window" (another Hollies hit), and the phenomenal Yardbirds classic "For Your Love" (even if it made Clapton leave the band). The covers by 10cc are obviously not the originals, but they are still good songs that hold up, nonetheless. Perhaps, in part, the reason I liked this part of the DVD, other than nostalgia, is that for the first three songs, it's just two acoustic guitars and four vocals. No overwhelming gloss, no show-off instrumentalism (and contraptions, such as chimes). Just some basic killer riffs over decent lyrics. With "For Your Love," it is back to full-band mode, but again, it's not hyper-glazed. And besides, it's such a great song, period.

For "Old Wild Men" and the relatively newer "Beautifulloser.com," original 10cc drummer and vocalist Kevin Godley comes back and shows that he has a better voice than Gouldman, as does Mick Wilson, who does his solo with the likes of "Donna," "The Dean and I" and the aforementioned "I'm Not in Love." That's not to say Gouldman has a bad voice, far from it, but it's lost the most range over the years. But he still comes strong, such as when he brings up "The Bridge to Your Heart," which is a tune from his other band Wax (which Gouldman had formed with Linda Rondstadt stalwart, Andrew Gold (2011).

For the finale, "Rubber Bullets," Goldley joins again for vox and percussion. The song makes me think of a more poppy version of a cross between Elvis's "Jailhouse Rock" and Stiff Little Fingers' "Suspect Device," if they had tight harmonies and was a bit, well, limp (other than Rick Fenn's blazing guitar solo).

Of course, the image is HD, and the sound top notch (one of the joys of recent recordings). Fans of the band will be happy to release a little 10cc.

There are some interesting extras. First is a 50 minute talking head interview with Gouldman who discourses about his writing process, discussing it song-by-song from the show. He also describes recording the pieces, and other matters regarding the band history. The second

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extra is a 17 minute clip from a show on March 19, 2007, at St. David's Hall in Cardiff, where the band plays "Old Wild Men" and "Rubber Bullets"; it was Godley's his first show in 30 years. The sound and visual is a bit fuzzier, but important music history to some. There is also some backstage footage. Interestingly, he's wearing the exact same thing in the London show. The last extra is the 10-minute "The Art of 10cc with Storm Thorgerson," which is an interview with the man who created the graphic design for 10cc's sheet music and album covers.

Band:

Graham Gouldman: Vocals / bass/guitar
Rick Fenn: Guitar/bass / vocals
Mick Wilson: Percussion / vocals
Mike Stevens: Keyboards /sax / vocals
Paul Burgess: Drums
Kevin Godley (special appearance): Vocals

Set list:

The Wall Street Shuffle
The Things We Do For Love
Good Morning Judge
I'm Mandy, Fly Me
Life is a Minestrone
Art for Art's Sake
Bus Stop
No Milk Today
Look Through Any Window
For Your Love
Old Wild Men
Beautifulloser.com
Silly Love
Donna
The Dean and I
Bridge to Your Heart
I'm Not in Love
Dreadlock Holiday
Ready to Go Home
Rubber Bullets