

Living Colour puts CBGB to rest

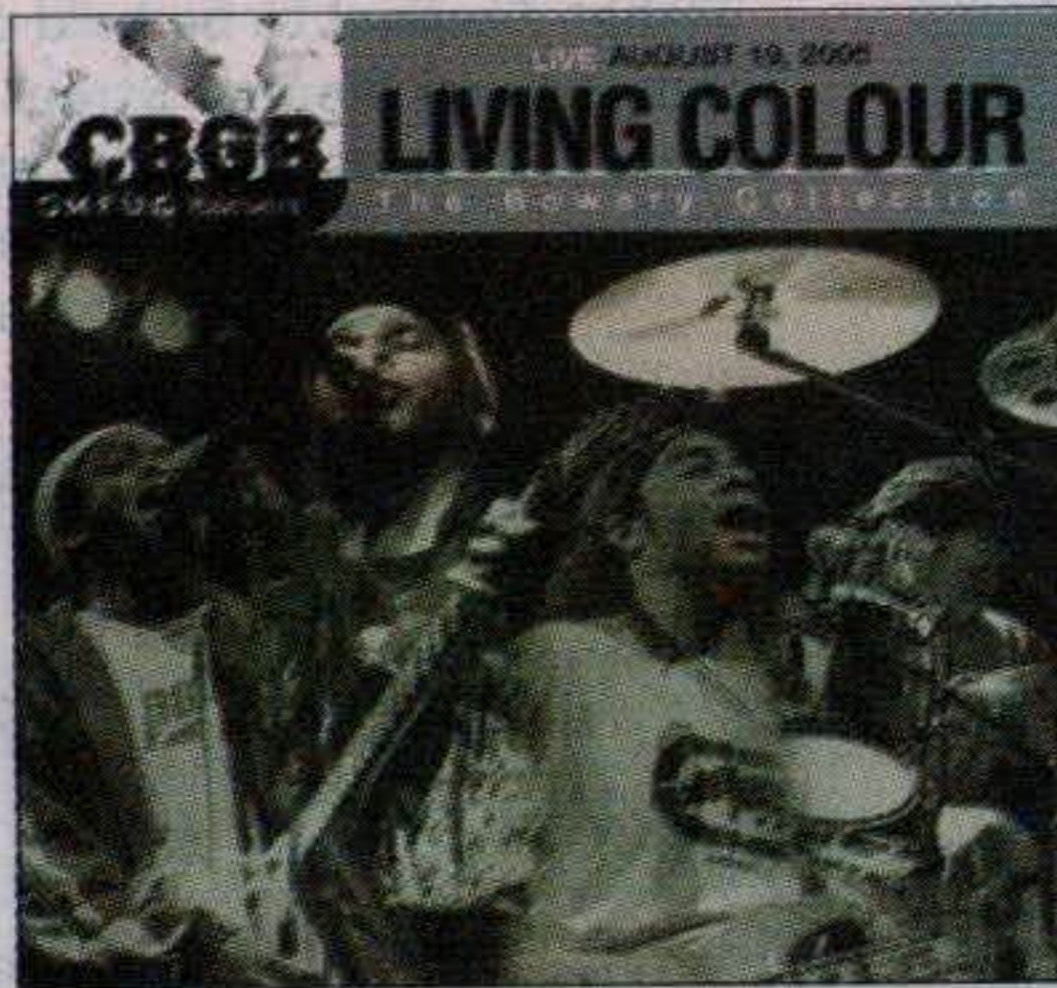
BY MARK FISHER
FOR THE TIMES WEST VIRGINIAN

While Living Colour is certainly one of the most forgotten bands in rock and roll history, anyone who has witnessed them live has them forever etched in their brain. In the late '80s/early '90s the band made a name for themselves with hits like "Glamour Boys," "Type" and the wildly popular "Cult Of Personality."

Reunited in the new millennium the band released a lackluster album, entitled "Collide-O-Scope," and has done a solid amount of touring. Having seen them live, I can personally attest to Living Colour's unbelievable passion for what they do, despite their often over-produced albums. "The Bowery Collection" from MVD Audio has set out to prove just that with the release of Living Colour's live performance from legendary rock club CBGB's final days.

While the recording itself is plagued with a lot of treble and not enough bass to match up, it's undeniable that Living Colour are destroying the place one song at a time. Hailed as the only true descendents of Jimi Hendrix, the band rip through all their classics, breathing fresh life into them by making them heavier, funkier and more electronic.

Those familiar with only their studio



SUBMITTED PHOTO

albums may be a bit surprised here as the band incorporate numerous samples and free-form musical pieces that elongate the songs while making them sound full of life and fury. Opening with "Type" and "Middle Man," guitarist Vernon Reid and singer Corey Glover quickly find their feet before unleashing the more controversial "Funny Vibe" and "In Your Name," which both address the racial tensions amongst us.

The album reaches its pinnacle halfway through with the back to back power numbers, "Sacred Ground" and "Open Letter To Landlord." Both are highlights and couldn't have been more relevant to the situation at

hand as CBGB's would close soon after.

"Sacred Ground" declares the legendary club as such while the band sing the praises of the club that once gave this very band their start when no one else believed during "Open Letter to a Landlord." The latter speaks to the fact that we can tear down physical buildings but we can't replace the memories that made them special places.

It's funny sometimes how a song can be 20 years old and more relevant today than ever, given the current state of the mortgage industry and the economic crisis at hand.

Other LC classics included here are "Glamour Boys," "Love Rears It's Ugly Head," "Time's Up" and "Cult of Personality." The latter is really the only song that is played pretty much as it was on the band's debut album, Vivid.

This is a great album from one of the most underrated bands of my generation. "People tried to put them down" but in 2008 they are still here and sounding better than they did in their prime. I suggest picking this up and introducing (or reintroducing) yourself to the men who keep hard rock soulful and passionate, Living Colour.

"Living Colour: The Bowery Collection" is available everywhere now via MVD Audio. For more information visit www.mvdaudio.com

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