

[Johnny Thunders Ringtones](#)

Send Complimentary Ringtones to your cell. BestTones4U.info

[Johnny Thunders](#)

Looking for Johnny Thunders? Find exactly what you want today.



THE GLASS BOTTOM BOAT OF THE CULTURAL PRESS

[Home](#) :: [Interviews](#) :: [Music Reviews](#) :: [Event Reviews](#) :: [News](#) :: [Blogs](#) :: [Screen](#) :: [Print](#) :: [Features](#) :: [Columns](#)

Search

Johnny Thund

February 2008

- [Event Reviews](#)
- [Interviews](#)
- [Music Reviews](#)
- [Print Reviews](#)
- [Screen Reviews](#)

Screen Reviews

- [Iron Maiden: Live After Death](#)
- [Roxy Music : The Thrill Of It All](#)
- [Johnny Thunders: Who's Been Talking?](#)
- [The Sun](#)

x-Reference

- [New York Dolls](#)
- [Kid Creole and the Coconuts](#)
- [Prince](#)
- [Chuck Berry](#)
- [Keith Richards](#)
- [Buster Poindexter](#)

Johnny Thunders: Who's Been Talking?

MVD Visual

So upon reading the hype line: "Rare live footage from last ever recorded concert!" I can pretty much figure out what you were hoping you'd see, a scabby, sallow wreck of a man stumbling through doomed songs about doomed people (with the subtext as clear as a neon needle pointing straight at him), occasionally rallying and transcending his sorry state with the same bottled lightning that a Hank Williams

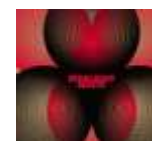


could summon forth, even at the very end. Maybe that's what I was thinking I'd see too, I'm really not going to comment on that one way or the other. The iconology of Saint Johnny of the Wounded Vein is very unfair to Johnny Thunders, genius fucking rock and roll singer. Y'know? But it doesn't matter what you wanted to see, or what you'd thought you'd see, because *Who's Been Talking?* immortalizes one fucking slick concert in Osaka, Japan.

Ya might call it a revue, cabaret even. But it ain't jokey and campy and winky. It seems, with the benefit of hindsight, that this might have been Thunders getting his last chance to do the big rock and soul revue that he always had in him. Otis Redding at Monterey Pop style. Or maybe he thought the Japanese would love a bigger than life spectacle. Or, it could have been him trying to one-up Buster Poindexter/David Johanssen at his own bequiffed game. There certainly is as much in the way of cabaret dramatics and pop music

Amazon

Support Ink 19... Buy stuff here!



The Starlight Mints Drowaton

Sticky sweet, razor sharp (Anton Wagner)

at Amazon from \$3.99

caricatures on display here from a band that looks like a cross between the E Street Band and the late night dregs on the Sunset Strip circa the late '80s and a backup singer who looks like Dolly Parton without all that pesky subtlety (good set of pipes though and she's not afraid to mash-potato all over the place). What's all this, then? The band is ridiculously tight, fleshing out the numbers with glammy flair - and that sax player, man oh man! I don't even like sax players, but this dude - I have some more recordings he did with Thunders when the two played acoustic shows together - maximum sadness. What's more, the setlist is littered with classic jukebox nuggets like "Pipeline," "I'm Not Your Stepping Stone," and "Hit the Road Jack" in favor of darker fare, like say, "Chinese Rocks." Such an omission would surely have caused a riot in Europe; the superior Japanese, they just take it all in stride. Thunders is a revelation - he looks like a fucking teddy boy version of the Joker, deathly pale with huge coal black hair and makeup, wearing a tartan suit with trench coat and crazy ass boutonniere. The trench is discarded in favor of a leather jacket, surely a nod to Marlon Brando. He sings, he mugs, he plays guitar, he slurs banter between songs, shit, he duck walks for all I can tell. You get to see all sides of the performer, too: One minute, he's perched dolefully on the lip of the stage during "So Alone" doing his best Johnny Ray or Frank Sinatra, the very next song, he's sneering through a raw "Personality Crisis." What's not to love?

Where do I start with that? The problem is that it seems the cameraman accidentally loaded up the Barbara Walters lens for the show - hence, the concert appears gauzy/vaseliney, hallucinatory, and slightly out of focus. Is Thunders already dead? Is this video live from Heaven? (And don't even fucking try and tell me that Thunders didn't make it to heaven. Even if there's no heaven, he's in heaven. Settled.) Or maybe it was just a bad transfer from videotape, but it drives me fucking mad. I keep thinking my eyes are going bad. I even had to make someone come over and watch a few minutes just to verify. As long as I'm on the subject - there're too many wide shots. They must not have had a big enough camera crew (or maybe the Japanese were too polite to get onstage), but I'd love to see more tight shots and closeups so I'd have the feeling I was really there. A shame too, because the sound quality is really ace and crystal clear.

We won't see the likes of Johnny again. And that makes

[2008: God's Final Witness](#)

Unprecedented destruction will come in 2008, leading to America's fall.
www.the-end.com

[Johnny Thunders Radio](#)

Free Unlimited Listening! Start Streaming Music Online Now.
www.Pandora.com

[Get Kid Rock Songs](#)

Free & Legal Music Downloads. Get Your Favorite Song or Artist Today!
www.SpiralFrog.com

[CMT Music Awards](#)

Watch Garth Brooks at the CMT Music Awards - 4/14 at 8/7c!
CMT.com

it even more of a shame that with his untimely death, there's always going to be a market for products that don't quite do justice to him. Unfortunately, *Who's Been Talking?* just MIGHT be one of those cash-ins.

MVD Visual: mvdb2b.com

Matthew Moyer



© 1991-2007 Ink 19

| [Back Issues](#)

| [Contact Us](#)

| [Credits](#)

| [More Info](#)