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T.S.O.L.: The Early Years Live (Music Video Distributors DVD)

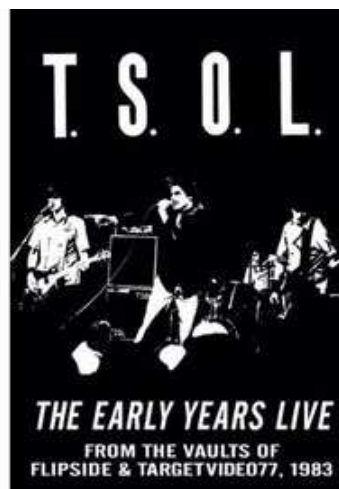
Picture: C+ Sound: C+
Extras: C+ Program: B

T.S.O.L. (AKA True Sounds of Liberty) as they are seldom referred to as is a band that few people, except most punk-metal rockers, are familiar with. Unlike some of the more popular classic punk-metal bands, TSOL flew under the radar a bit more and are being more discovered now than ever before. True punk fans are highly familiar with their work and now much of the bands work is being brought forth from the vaults, including this set, which contains the "early years" circa 1983. It's clear to see here that this band became set apart from the punk movement of the late 70's though and one reason for their re-discovery is the celebration of vicious grind-core that has started a wave of recirculation in recent years.

Unlike so many poor punk bands that think that screaming and jumping around while playing three-out-of-tune chords is 'cool' and very 'punk-esque', this band set out to be more evolved than their contemporaries and never really became set on one identity and while they remained highly popular in the underground, they were never really brought into the spotlight of glamour and fame, which is the essence of punk to begin with. According to the packaging the band consists of members Jack Grisham, Ron Emory, Mike Roche, and Francis Gerald Barnes, but I am not certain that is the right name, I think that the package might be wrong here as the drummers name that I am familiar with is Todd Barnes.

Track Listing:

Beneath the Shadows
Love Story
Forever Old
Man and Machine
Darker My Love
Waiting for You



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Code Blue
Weathered Statues
Superficial Love
Wash Away
Abolish Government/Silent Majority
The Other Side
She'll be Saying


Fans will be glad to see a mixture of songs from their debut album **Dance With Me**, along with the EP release called simply **T.S.O.L.**, which was also released in 1981, plus 1982's album **Beneath the Shadows**. So the focus on this DVD set is the band during it's more hardcore era as a true punk band rather than it's evolved state as a more popular metal band, which would occur by the mid-80's with albums like **Hit and Run** and quite frankly their popularity also lead to critical failures one after another and would be the case for nearly 15 years until 2001's **Disappear** and 2003's **Divided We Stand**. It's great to have this DVD set to see the band at its best and most importantly it's origins as a band, but sad at the same time knowing how they declined for two decades.

The full-frame picture is about as good as anyone can imagine concert footage being that is 20+ years old of a hardcore punk band. Then again, most people are not expecting this to look that great, but hopefully sound good and the Dolby Digital 5.1 mix offers some decent audio fidelity, but doesn't quite give the audio performance that would truly capture this band like being there live, then again you might have to crank your system up to level ear bleed to get even close and even then it doesn't quite compare, but having this set is still better than nothing.

There is a bonus clip included from the archives, plus a few little extras that I won't mention from the band, and interviews with the band that make this a nice little package for the die-hard **T.S.O.L.** fan!

- Nate Goss

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