



Allan Holdsworth And Alan Pasqua Live

Review by Joe Milliken

There is no doubt that Allan Holdsworth is one of the great, under rated and under appreciated jazz/fusion/rock guitarists of the last 30 years, especially in America. His versatility alone is interesting, if not astounding to most who are familiar with his work. Holdsworth first burst onto the scene when he and keyboard player Alan Pasqua performed in the late, legendary drummer Tony Williams' New Lifetime band, one of the original jazz fusion groups of the early 1970's. Of course Tony Williams was discovered by Miles Davis at age 17 and became his drummer in the early 1960's.

Over the years Holdsworth and Pasqua have collaborated on a few occasions, but this DVD is special. In 2006 Holdsworth and Pasqua put a special tour together to honor the iconic drummer Williams, teaming up with two other friends and amazing musicians in their own right, drummer Chad Wackerman and bassist Jimmy Haslip.

Filmed at Yoshi's in Oakland, CA by Altitude Digital (in HD), this is arguably the best video footage of Holdsworth currently available. (and this reviewer has seen most of them, including bootleg footage) The visuals are vibrant and the sound crisp and clean with a good bottomend. At times the editing is a bit rapid, with shots quickly jumping from one musician to the next, but overall this is a minor quirk.

Despite Holdsworth's mesmerizing legatostyle guitar work, this is certainly not simply a <sup>3</sup>Holdsworth showcase,<sup>2</sup> because the musicians around him are stellar in their own right. Pasqua creates infectious fusion grooves while Wackerman and Haslip are quite frankly, an impeccable rhythm section.

Wackerman utilizes a smaller kit than this reviewer remembers him playing during his time with Frank Zappa in the late 80's, creating a tighter platform in which to drive the rhythms.

The set list is a wellrounded blend of old and new, featuring a few Pasqua compositions, a couple Pasqua/Holdsworth compositions, a Wackerman song mixed in and of course, three classic fusion tracks from the Tony William's Lifetime heyday, <sup>3</sup>Fred,<sup>2</sup> <sup>3</sup>Proto Cosmos<sup>2</sup> and <sup>3</sup>Red Alert.<sup>2</sup> If you are a Holdsworth fan however, there is no mistake that the guitar master is really the main attraction here, pulling off his patented, ultraquick and smooth visceral runs and cerebral chord progressions that are almost too much to believe, unless your seeing it with your own eyes of course!

It is a shame that Allan Holdsworth has never got the recognition he deserves. The type of recognition he has received over the years from such guitar peers as Pat Metheny and Edward Van Halen. Do you think they know what they're talking about?