



Live at the Rainbow 1977

Ian Gillan

Angel Air and MVD team up to bring this wonderful DVD of the Deep Purple vocalist with his solo group in a short but sweet 34 minute concert taped on May 14, 1977. Don't confuse the venue where there was recorded, The Rainbow, with Ian's Deep Purple bandmate Ritchie Blackmore's group, RAINBOW, (AND DON'T BE Rainbow), and don't expect it to sound like SOLO Blackmore's solo work either. Gillan's efforts - ranging from the lead role on the Jesus Christ Superstar recording to a stint as the frontman for Black Sabbath - makes him one of the more unique frontmen in rock. Having the luxury of Deep Purple to fall back on allows him to stretch here, and it is the addition of those extras that make up for the brevity of the concert. There's an eight minute audio interview with Gillan from a Japanese tour and a six minute video interview with underrated journeyman Ray Fenwick. Fenwick produced Jo Jo Laine's music on Mercury Records six years after his band Fancy hit with "Wild Thing" and "Touch Me", two songs that would have fit nicely into the Ian Gillan Band's set but are, sadly, missing. There are six audio tracks listed as "rarities", and the songs range from good to excellent, especially the final track "Reaching Out". The audio material is played while the image of a Fostex recorder spins with photos of the group zipping in and out (though not enough of them). There's also an 8 page electronic biography by writer Joe Geesin, and the magic of the concert. There are lots of quirky delights throughout the show, delights beyond the marvelous filming - the flutist and the drummer's amusing interplay into opening up "Child In Time". For the fans of Gillan's main band, this is all quite a revelation - "Smoke On The Water" coming off as the pop tune it is, without RITCHIE BLACKMORE'S Ritchie Blackmore's thunderous sludge power chords stamping it heavy metal. FENWICK KEEPS THEM IN Fenwick keeps them in check with more finesse' making for a somewhat unique rendition on par with some of the "rarities" here. The songwriting credits are shared with keyboard player COLIN TOWNS, COLIN TOWNS, RO Colin Towns, SIDEMA Roxy Music sideman/bassist AN John Gustafson and drummer, JUS Mark Nauseef, just as Deep Purple shared credits on their material. "Clear Air Turbulence" and "Money Lender" are more progressive rock than the pop material heard on the "rarities", or the Deep Purple covers, for that matter. The texture of the "film" appears to be high quality videotape, including good camera cuts and fine lighting. It's a real keeper for those who have followed this artist's quite lengthy solo career. The CD version of this contains a studio version of the song "Twin Exhausted", not found here (except for two truncated snippets), but the CD version doesn't have all the other extras making this the essential item.