



Ian Gillan: Live at the Rainbow 1977 ★★★★★

Label: Angel Air Waves

Released: 2006



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Does the world need to hear another version of “Smoke on the Water”? The answer is, probably not. I think in my 39 years, I have probably heard that song enough. It is the definition of “classic,” with an undeniably catchy guitar riff, but familiarity does eventually breed contempt. However, if you take one of the principal writers of the song and he constructs a band of musicians very different than those in [Deep Purple](#) and you deliver a jazz fusion-influenced version of it, I say let the fucking song be heard, yet again.

After taking some time off upon leaving Deep Purple, Gillan formed the Ian Gillan band and delivered a brand of music different than he had with his previous group. Where Purple mixed metal and prog, the Gillan band mixed fusion and prog. The [DVD](#) features 5 songs (about 34 minutes), three from Purple’s catalogue (“Child in Time”, “Smoke on the Water” and “Woman from Tokyo”) played differently than when Richie Blackmore, Gillan and the boys recorded them, and two songs from the Ian Gillan band debut, 1977’s *Clear Air Turbulence*. The material is performed in a manner that breathed new life into Gillan, and it shows.

The DVD includes audio of a Gillan interview while the [band](#) was in Japan, a recent interview with Ray Fenwick, Gillan’s guitarist in the project, and audio files of six songs recorded by the Ian Gillan Band. This really is an interesting chapter in the Purple/Gillan/Rainbow/Blackmore soap opera. This is not the longest DVD released, but the quality and fascinating material make it a worthy purchase.

~R. David Smola

pretendcritic@aol.com