

Gillan - Live Edinburgh 1980 / 2006 MVD / 120 Minutes /
<http://www.mvdb2b.com> / Reviewed 01 June 2006 / Rating: 7.8/10

The brutality of the music that starts out this DVD is confusing. To hear something so raw and rough should remind listeners of early-eighties Iron Maiden or (even more) Judas Priest. The fact that there can be current and past incarnations of Gillan's work shows that the fire that resided in eir during Deep Purple ("Smoke in the Water") is the bombastic opening to the earlier tracks on the DVD is still present during the 2006 version of the individual. The only thing that seems to be weak with the disc are the extras previously mentioned. The sound on the extra tracks is atrocious, and sounds almost as if they were playing through a thick pad of carpet.

However, the concert footage that is the main focus of this DVD - Gillan, in Edinburgh during 1980 - is sharp with only a minor degradation in the sound that is present. In fact, the only thing that individuals might want with this DVD is a little better production of the vocals. I understand that the concert was recorded over 25 years ago, but if the production had a little less bass and higher guitar levels, the enjoyment that one can take from the disc would be exponentially increased. For someone that is new to Gillan, the hard-rocking sound that they come up with during tracks like "Unchain Your Brain" makes me want to run out and pick up whatever is currently out on disc. Gillan seems extraordinarily based in the classic, as "Trouble" shows a lineage that goes beyond the first cover of the track (Elvis) back to the blues style that was envisioned by Leiber and Stoller.

Gillan, with their cover of "Trouble" on this DVD, set the stage for hard rock bands covering classic tracks, whether it be Twisted Sister's version of "Leader of the Pack" or Van Halen's version of Roy Orbison's classic "Pretty Women" (the style also manifests itself in Motley Crue's cover of "Smokin' In The Boys' Room"). The performance is a little on the short side (six tracks, at around 20 minutes), but I'd be dammed if I failed to mention that those twenty minutes were some of the most memorable in rock and roll. This is due to the fact that Gillan is not just the lead singer, nor is it just a shrill guitar wreaking havoc.

The entire band is vital to the success of any of the tracks during this performance. For example, "If You Believe Me" is a track that chugs along with the bass and drums, but is given the final polish by a piano line, a shrill guitar, and a soulful set of vocals. For fans of hard rock, of the type that Deep Purple and Dio would play in the seventies and Whitesnake would play in the eighties, "Live Edinburgh 1980" is a DVD to pick up. The extras may be a little weak, but the main performance is amazing, and even more so considering the age of the tape.

Top Track: If You Believe Me

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