

## Robin Trower - Living Out Of Time (Live)



Performance ★★★★★★  
 Production ★★★★★★

Back when I was still in elementary school, circa the mid-70's, I could always count on my older brother for a couple of new albums on my birthday. The deal was, I got to pick one album of my choosing, which was probably some kick-ass Styx, Foreigner, or Boston at the time, as long as he got to pick the other album - thereby sprinkling a little salt on my rather lean musical appetite. Being twelve years older than I was, he usually picked some crap that I had never heard of, or wasn't particularly interested in hearing at that young age. 1976 was the year that my album choice was also accompanied by Robin Trower's *Bridge Of Sighs*.

"What the hell is this bro? I asked for Kiss *Destroyer*! And what's with the weird album cover?" At that age, album cover art was very influential to my album purchasing decisions, since I didn't actually know jack about music yet. My first incursion into Black Sabbath territory was actually via *Technical Ecstasy*, solely because it had the coolest album cover. Little did I know it was their worst album. My collection still proudly has every one of those albums that my brother Dave got me - *Abraxas*, *Innervisions*, *Aja*, *Beck-Ola* - but they have since been elevated from my "crap" list, to my essential list.

Well, my brother's master plan to broaden my musical horizons was slowly having an affect, because even for an 11-year old musical genius like myself, the powerhouse, psychedelic-laced, blues-rock I found on *Bridge Of Sighs* was a revelation. The killer opening guitar riffs on "Day Of The Eagle", the mind-bending title track, and on to the album's stunning closer, "Little Bit Of Sympathy", every single track was astonishing. One of those rare "no-filler" albums. I still consider *Bridge Of Sighs* to be one of the greatest guitar albums of all time, even though I still don't know what the hell that thing on the cover is.

*Living Out Of Time (Live)* was recorded at the Harmonie in Bonn, Germany, for the Rockpalast TV show, on March 9th, 2005 - Trower's 60th birthday. When he first takes the stage, Trower is greeted by an audience singing happy birthday and showering the floor with huge sparklers. I have never seen Robin Trower live, and have not seen photos of him in well over a decade, so I was a little bit startled at how old he looks now. He looks much closer to 70, rather than the 60 years he was celebrating this night, which made me wonder if he had been experiencing any major health

problems recently. It just seemed a little weird watching your grandfather fire off these ferocious guitar licks from his Fender Strat, like he was possessed by Hendrix himself.

The important thing is, Robin Trower is still playing like he is in his prime. To prove it, he confidently kicks off the proceedings with his *Bridge Of Sighs* classic, "Too Rolling Stoned", and proceeds to lay down one of the best versions I have ever heard. Wisely, he also visits three more of that album's best songs, "Day Of The Eagle", "Bridge Of Sighs", and "Little Bit Of Sympathy". He doesn't compromise either, as each of these classics get the full or extended treatment. "Sighs", in particular, sees Trower nearly slip into trance as he takes the song on a mesmerizing, 10-minute, journey full of improvisation. The focus of this performance was definitely on the new stuff though, as he introduced four new songs from his 2004 album, *Living Out Of Time*, along with the still unreleased song "Close Every Door". Normally, I'd be bitching to stick with the classics, but the new stuff, "Sweet Angel", "What's Your Name", "Living Out Of Time", and "Please Tell Me", easily stood head to head with some of his very best material.

Trower's playing is every bit as heavy and aggressive as it was 30 years ago. He certainly hasn't mellowed out and slowed down with age, like many of his contemporaries have. For this tour, and the new album, Trower re-enlisted his late-80's lineup of Davey Pattison on vocals, Dave Bronze on bass, and Pete Thomson on drums. This is one hell of a tight band that knows how to bring the most out of Trower's music. Pattison's vocals are soulful and gritty, and he sounds enough like the late, great James Dewar to make you think you were hearing the original band again. His stage presence was almost nonexistent though, at times you nearly forget he was up there, but his powerful vocals made this some of the best live Robin Trower performances I have ever heard. By the reaction of the rather lifeless German crowd, you would never know it though, but that is pretty much standard behavior for them. They appeared sufficiently awed, just very polite about it.

The audio was mixed perfectly for this type of show. Trower's guitar was right up front, with a raw and muscular sound, the bass was deep and defined, and every tool of the drum kit stood out brilliantly. I was comparing this against some of the older live Trower material that I own, and this is as good as it gets. The widescreen video presentation looks good, but some of the hand-held camera shots were shaky and out of focus. The director provided an abundance of excellent close-ups showing Trower's fluid fretwork, but often switched camera angles too quickly. I would have appreciated more shots of the entire stage, showing the entire band working together, and giving you a better feel for the atmosphere of the venue. My biggest complaint is that the performance is much too short at only 72 minutes.

The extra features include an interview with Trower which finds him discussing his beginnings in the music business, opening for the Beatles when they shared the same management, his time in Procol Harum, and on up to his current resurgence. This fine performance has already convinced me to get the new *Living Out Of Time* album and probably the recent follow up, *Another Days Blues*, which I hear is just as good. It is inspiring to see such a strong resurgence from this aging guitar legend.

*Reviewed by Paul M. Roy - March 2006*

[Comments or Complaints?](#)

<b>Technical Details</b>
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<p><b>Audio Transfer</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dolby Digital 5.1 Surround</li> <li>• PCM 2.0 Stereo</li> </ul>	<p><b>Video Transfer</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1.78:1 - Anamorphic Widescreen</li> </ul>
<p><b>Set List</b></p> <p>Too Rolling Stoned  Sweet Angel  What's Your Name  Rise Up Like The Sun  Daydream  Living Out Of Time  Breathless  Day Of The Eagle  Bridge Of Sighs  Close Every Door  I Want You To Love Me  Please Tell Me  Little Bit Of Sympathy</p>	<p><b>Performers</b></p> <p>Robin Trower - Guitar/Backing Vocals  Davey Pattison - Vocals  Dave Bronze - Bass/Backing Vocals  Pete Thomson - Drums</p>
<p><b>Running Time:</b> 72 Minutes</p>	<p><b>DVD Release Date</b> - February 2006  <b>Performance Date</b> - March 2005</p>



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