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Guns N Roses – 2 Classic Albums Under Review: Use You Illusion I & II (MVD/Chrome Dreams)

Picture: C+ Sound: C+ Extras: C- Main Program: C+

So what happened to Guns N Roses? The same answer could fit for another question: what happened to Rock music? Both can be easily answered by the same way, the arrogance and laziness of Axel Rose cut them both down. Rock will continue and is making a comeback of sorts, but whether there will ever be another GNR (as we shall refer to them henceforth) album is another story. **Chinese Democracy** is the most expensive album ever made, epitomizing Rose's attitude.

Rock goes down the drain when its biggest proponents fail it or sell it out. Despite their commercial success, I always felt the two volumes of **Use You Illusion** were among the most pretentious, tired, non-Rock, regressive, lazy, smug and self-impressed releases of the 1990s and maybe all time. This new **Under Review** look at the albums reminds us of this, especially as everyone acts as phonily friendly as they are high, two "delusions" that were soon to come crashing down as rose fired everyone and worse.

The program is suddenly full of ironies as everyone is having a great time, acts like *November Rain* is important and you can just see the hairline cracks before the fall of a band that brought back edgy rock before failing it as if they had never been there. Running a long 85 minutes, fans (they do exist, many of whom actually agree with this position) will enjoy it, but it feels and plays as a far more distant event than 1991 when Geffen Records issued both sets instead of a double set. No wonder albums and Rock have fallen on hard times.

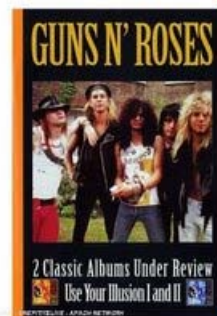
Many feel a release of **Chinese Democracy** would revitalize Rock, but with Rose's attitude and constant ego-fueled failure to finish it, the title just might be ironic as if he would rather wait until the title refers to the real thing because the album probably will not come out until then. That could mean never. **Use You Illusion** then has new meaning, as if they remain a great band. Rose has burned (among other things) so many bridges, the illusion is over. Now, you can see the final record of its decline.

The 1.33 X 1 image is colorful, but can be soft and blurred because of its analog PAL origins, but lays back just fine otherwise. The Dolby Digital 2.0 Stereo is good, if not great, but plays the music back decently. Some archival sources for things like interviews are monophonic. Extras include *L.A. Stories* (just over 10 minutes) featurette, text contributor biographies and another tough quiz.

You can read more from this series on the band at this link:

<http://www.fulvuedrive-in.com/review/4780/Guns+N'+Roses+DVD+Collector's+Box>

- Nicholas Sheffo



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