



Siggi Schwarz and Michael Schenker - Live Together 2004

With the release of Live Together 2004 (Schwarz Music/MVD Audio), German rock guitarists Siggi Schwarz and Michael Schenker join forces to deliver a powerful show of classic rock standards and gems, recorded live in Heidenheim, Germany (of course) in December of 2004.

Although not as widely known in America as Jimmy Page, Ritchie Blackmore or Jeff Beck, outside of America Schenker is regarded as one of the most influential metal/rock guitarists for his work with metal pioneers UFO as well as his solo work as The Michael Schenker Group (MSG).

Having admired Schenker's work (especially with UFO) for years, I was excited to get this CD in my mailbox for review, despite (and admittedly) not being familiar with Schwarz. Although it certainly did not take long to realize that Schwarz could easily hold his own alongside Schenker and his trademark, black and white FlyingV guitar.

The tracks are also ³recorded absolutely live, DIRECT CUT² track stereo, no overdubs!², to put it exactly as they do in the CD booklet. So what you see, or hear in this case, is what you get!

Also featuring Martin Hesener on vocals and bass and Bernd Elsenhans on drums, Schwarz and Schenker absolutely rip through eleven rock favorites including Bad Company's ³Can't Get Enough² and ³Wishing Well², the Kinks ³You Really Got Me² and UFO's ³Only You Can Rock Me² and ³Rock Bottom².

Although the arrangements of these classic songs basically remain true to the originals, (which in this reviewer's opinion is a good thing) these two German shredders truly stand out in their own respective solos, often times squaring off for a dueling battle of metal riffing.

While Schwarz reflects more of a bluesy-rock style, Schenker has never strayed too far from his more classic metal sound reminiscent of his 1970's work with UFO and Scorpions, for which his younger brother Rudolph Schenker is a guitarist.

Perhaps surprisingly, the two styles bounce off and balance each other nicely with Schenker carving up the old UFO classics, while Schwarz takes a hold of the more bluesy-based, Bad Company rockers.

Although the German-drenched vocals of Hesener leave a little to be desired in the fact that his English seems a little broken at times, for an old Michael Schenker fan from way back this live CD is simply a great find.

And for those rockers out there who might not know of the German Axeman with the FlyingV, it could be worth your while to check him out.

Joe Milliken