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THE REV. KEITH A. GORDON STUMBLES MINDLESSLY THROUGH THE SORDID FLOTSAM AND JETSAM OF ALTERNATIVE CULTURE TO FIND SUBJECTS TO WRITE ABOUT THAT POSSESS THE ELUSIVE "TRADEMARK OF QUALITY." MP3 FILES ARE POSTED HERE STRICTLY FOR THE PURPOSE OF MUSIC CRITICISM AND THEREFORE FALL UNDER THE "FAIR USE" GUIDELINES OF U.S. COPYRIGHT LAW.

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TUESDAY, MAY 6, 2008

Man Rocks The Roadhouse!

First things first – ya gotta remember that this is a DVD of a 32-year-old concert film. If you're expecting a lovely, multi-camera digital tape with pristine 5.1 surround sound, well, you're living in the wrong era, Charlie Brown. What you do get from *At The Roundhouse 1976* is an engaging vintage performance by one of rock music's most overlooked prog-oriented bands, **Man**.



At The Roundhouse 1976 features, perhaps, Man's best line-up as far as pure talent and chemistry is concerned. The performance captured on tape includes vocalist/guitarist Mickey Jones, guitarist/vocalist Deke Leonard, keyboardist Phil Ryan, bassist John McKenzie, and extraordinary drummer Terry Williams. Man was formed by Jones and Leonard in 1969 in Swansea, Wales and was originally considered somewhat of a pub-rock band. Influenced by the San Francisco sound of bands like Quicksilver Messenger Service, Man also incorporated

Trademark Of Quality is primarily an "audioblog" featuring criticism and



history of music in the rock, punk, metal, progressive and blues genres, along with samples in mp3 format. Music files are posted for a brief time and then the links will be removed. You can write us to remove a link if you feel that we've infringed upon your "intellectual property." Hey, we're all just trying to get along here.

We are also not above writing about a number of other subjects on TMQ, from books, comics and toys to DVDs, electronic gadgets, computer equipment and musical gear. While you're online, why don't you visit one of our other blog, or visit the Reverend's [That Devil Music Storefront](#) and maybe buy something, eh?

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elements of blues, psychedelic and prog-rock into their unique sound.

Over the course of the band's history, Deke Leonard would depart and return a number of times, recording brilliant solo albums before coming back to the comfort of the band atmosphere. Guitarist and keyboardist Clive John was an original member of Man, leaving during the mid-70s to pursue a solo career that resulted in a single highly-collectible album before disappearing from the scene. Williams, who came on board for the band's self-titled third album, would later play with both Rockpile and Dire Straits.

At The Roundhouse 1976 was originally designed to be the band's swansong, a final shot at glory captured for the ages on celluloid. After 1,500+ performances and 13 albums over the course of eight years, the band had decided to call it a day. Man returned to the site of their greatest triumph, London's Roundhouse, where they had experienced their breakthrough performance for the **Greasy Truckers Party** benefit show and resulting LP. The band decided to say "farewell" to their fans with three nights at the Roundhouse, which were filmed for this DVD.

At The Roundhouse 1976 kicks off with the bluesy "Babe, I'm Gonna Leave You," a rock-and-soul song with a distinctive rhythmic groove, Jone's pleading vocals, and tasty twin guitars that mimic Quicksilver Messenger Service (just one of the band's numerous influences). QMS had often performed this song in their early-70s concerts, and QMS guitarist John Cippolina had appeared with Man during the band's 1975 tour, Man and Cippolina jamming together on the tune. Man kept the song in their setlist, and here it's captured for posterity in all of its funky glory!

"C'Mon" follows, beginning as a raucous call-and-response styled rocker with an odd, spacey interlude in the middle. Jones sings some nonsensical lyrics that are wedded to the strange tones that coaxes from his guitar. As the song stretches out, the band wanders into uncharted territory, each instrumentalist adding their own color to the overall musical tapestry. Leonard provides a few scorching leads, Williams' powerful drums support the song's unlikely structure, and Ryan's keys lend an otherworldly

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ROCK TALK



ROCK TALK is a collection of interviews taken directly from the

hue to the song. The result is a breathtaking, unconventional jam.

"Let The Good Times Roll" is a jazzy blues romp. Leonard's vocals aren't particularly suited to the song, but they're supported by Jones' soulful backing vox. McKenzie sets a steady bass groove and Leonard's stinging six-string accomplishes the expression that his voice couldn't. "7171-551" is a swaggering, riff-driven up-tempo rocker that showcases Jones' wild guitar leads and Leonard's more deliberate, scorched-earth style. Both axemen rock hard throughout the song, infusing the rhythm with a thunderstorm of lightning fretwork and squalls of sound.

Leonard's edgy, rough-hewn vocals are better-suited to "Born With A Future," a less-than-subtle raver that provides short, sharp shocks of guitar pyrotechnics. There's an unexpected slow passage where Jones lends his vocals above washes of keyboards, before he and Leonard dive into some fine harmonies. Leonard provides the song with some first class axe-mangling, riffing madly with reckless abandon as Jones throws his single-note leads into the deep, chaotic instrumentation.

The longtime audience favorite "Bananas" is provided an OTT performance; a balls-out rocker that fades into near silence before swelling with Ryan's evervesant keyboard romps and Williams' steady, potent drumbeats and fills. Jones adds a finely-crafted solo with hints of rich tone and McKenzie's bass work is funky without overpowering the song's unique vibe. Leonard's vocals are crazed here, swapping back-and-forth with Jones more grounded voice, and the song ends the show as a last-man-standing instrumental free-for-all.

At The Roundhouse 1976 provides the viewer with a true concert atmosphere, sans smoke and crowd noise. The band's performance is shot mostly in close-ups, more than likely by a lone pair of cameras. The DVD's sound is quite good and consistent throughout, much better than I would have though given the age of the concert. Lighting is as good as one could hope for: spotlights sometime flare up into mini-sunspots of white light, but mostly the visuals are clear and well-lit.

In-between songs, especially near the beginning, there are brief interviews and commentary by the band and its fans, and backstage footage shows the various band members loose and

Reverend's private stash, including several previously unpublished works, vintage photos and a select discography for each artist. Paperback, 6"x9" 116-pages, black & white, \$11.00 postpaid. Click on the book cover to buy your copy of **ROCK TALK** from Amazon.com or use the PayPal button below to buy directly from the publisher and receive an autographed copy!

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ROCK TALK ARTISTS INTERVIEWED (COMPLETE LIST):

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ABOUT ME



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ready to roll. Forget about the tracklist on the rear of the DVD box, 'cause it's just plain wrong – the way that I outlined the performances above is how they play out on your TV screen.

By 1976, virtually all of Man's progressive elements had largely disappeared from the band's music, replaced by a hard rock edge that benefited from their explosive twin guitars and the powerful drumming of Terry Williams. Man would break-up after these Roundhouse performances, and a final live album culled from the shows would be released in '77 as ***All's Well That Ends Well***.

Jones would reunite with Leonard as Man a few years later, however, and over the past 25+ years former Man band members like Williams, Ryan and original bassist Martin Ace would rotate in and out of the roster for performances and recordings (many live). Man continues to perform in Europe to this day, and released the band's most recent album, ***Diamonds and Coal***, in 2007. (**Music Video Distributors**)

*(Click on the DVD cover to buy **At The Roundhouse 1976** from Amazon.com)*

Man - "Babe, I'm Gonna Leave You"



UNITED STATES

A music journalist with 35 years experience walking the pop culture beat, the Reverend was the editor of the popular Alt.Culture.Guide™ music webzine and book series. As a freelance writer, the self-proclaimed “Reverend of Rock & Roll” has had his words appear in over 100 regional, national and international publications. Gordon has also written extensively on subjects like the media, computers, technology and the Internet as well as music. A public speaker, book designer and samurai webmaster, the Reverend will do whatever is necessary to indoctrinate you with his vile propaganda.

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