

Julian Sas - Feelin' Alive (2017)

Written by bluesever

Thursday, 16 March 2017 16:19 - Last Updated Thursday, 18 March 2021 21:03

Julian Sas - Feelin' Alive (2017)



1. *Jump For Joy* (4:48) 2. *High And Low* (6:26) 3. *Did You Ever Wonder* (4:04) 4. *Fear Of Falling* (8:00) 5. *Mercy* (5:27) 6. *Coming Home* (4:31) 7. *Helping Hand* (8:18) 8. *Highway 61 Revisited* (4:45) 9. *Bullfrog Blues* (4:49)

Here in Bonn we are fortunate to have had Julian Sas return to our local live venue regularly over the last decade. In that time the said concert hall has got more crowded each year until it is a regular sell-out event. The reasons for that are excellently captured on this disc.

Like the Man he gets his inspiration from, Rory Gallagher, Julian Sas is at his best with guitar in hand and live audience to feed energy off. This disc is an enjoyable mix of thoughtful Sas originals rounded off by a couple of Rock classics with nods to Johnny Winter on 'Highway 61' and of course Mr Gallagher himself on the Mississippi classic 'Bullfrog Blues'.

What do we have then from last years excellent tour? 'Jump for Joy' is pure Sas Blues Rock with a scuddering Hammond from Bakker and a driving hook from the guitarman. The interplay between the two instruments was a highlight of last years live appearances and it's well represented here. 'High and Low' is a trek into Hendrix 'Foxy Lady' country with a meaty riff to back it up. "Don't need no romance. Just shake your tail!" Yep, pure Rock n Roll bravado.

'Did you ever Wonder' is a typical soul searching number from Holland's finest, with a scorching burbling guitar solo to top it off. It's stop/start beat shows how well the band gel together – particularly the timing of Rob 'Animal' Heijne is a highlight. concise, controlled and on the button as always. The big man is one of my favourite Rock drummers for his meaty but measured style.

Julian Sas - Feelin' Alive (2017)

Written by bluesever

Thursday, 16 March 2017 16:19 - Last Updated Thursday, 18 March 2021 21:03

'Fear of Falling' is the disc's big ballad (every great Rock album has one!) The lyrics are typically wordy and thoughtful but it's Sas' Peter Green style solo that makes the track.

In 'Mercy' we're back to the choppy, American Indian waltz rhythm evidenced on 'High and Low' earlier. Sas on the warpath "Screaming for a preacher" with the Devil at the door. Instead of Robert Johnson's hellhounds he's chased by Bakker in fine Jon Lord style on the Hammond. I almost expect to hear Ian Gillan come back on vocals afterwards. 'Coming Home' drops the momentum a little with an earnestness that doesn't seem to quite convince. A solo that is good but good isn't good enough for me when a great guitarman like Julian Sas is bending the strings.

With 'Helping Hand' we're back to what Julian Sas does best though – strident BluesRock in the Gallagher mould. There's an obvious touch of the G man's 'I take what I want' in the riff here and it's a good number, but that riff should lead into a frantic guitar solo rather than a Hammond sound and whilst Sas hits back with a strong solo later on the track, the blue touch-paper that the ferocious riff lit doesn't quite get the fireworks it deserves. All is far from lost however as Sas and Bakker begin trading licks for a high-point of the live disc and indeed the live shows themselves.

Switching to a Firebird (I can see him plugging it in with my mind's eye) we're off and positively rampant with 'Highway 61' and Sas' vocals are almost as super here as his slide soloing on that Firebird. I can see the audience jumping up and down to this one as clearly as I saw that Thunderbird.

"Well did you ever?..." If the back rows weren't up and boogying to the last one they will be here. No one will ever replace Rory of course for pure and passionate attack but Julian Sas does one heck of a fine job attempting the impossible. "Did you ever wake up with that bullfrog on your mind?" Well you will go to sleep with that Bullfrog on your mind for nights afterwards with a riff that doesn't quit for days (believe me I know this from Rory at Southampton Gaumont and Julian Sas some forty years later at Bonn Harmonie). When Julian asks if everybody is having a good time we don't need to hear the cheer to know they must be. Rock then; played by a band at the top of its game. The extra breadth afforded by relative newcomer, keyboardman Roland Bakker made last year's show the best I've witnessed by Julian Sas in Bonn which makes this live release the best from Julian thus far.

Julian Sas - Feelin' Alive (2017)

Written by bluesever

Thursday, 16 March 2017 16:19 - Last Updated Thursday, 18 March 2021 21:03

Is it perfect? Well, if you love the music of Julian Sas it very probably is, but a minor criticism for me is that in trying (and succeeding) in capturing the atmosphere of the Julian Sas Band live the disc seems to have lost sight of the atmosphere of the Julian Sas fans who make the gigs a party occasion. I can see Julian having a good time (that minds eye again) but I can't see all those smiling, predominantly Dutch, faces in front of him. Indeed there isn't even a hint of where the tracks were recorded. A shame Julian didn't record the Harmonie show and have the producer give the audience a share of the mix.

A live show is still better then, but in between give this a spin as loud as the neighbours will allow! --- 3songsbonn.com

download (mp3 @320 kbs):

[yandex](#) [mediafire](#) [uloz.to](#) [solidfiles](#) [global-files](#)

[back](#)