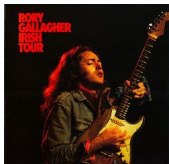


Rory Gallagher - Irish Tour (1974)

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Rory Gallagher - Irish Tour (1974)



1. *Cradle Rock* 2. *I Wonder Who* 3. *Tattoo'd Lady* 4. *Too Much Alcohol* 5. *As The Crow Flies* 6. *A Million Miles Away* 7. *Walk On Hot Coals* 8. *Who's That Coming?* 9. *Back On My Stompin' Ground (After Hours)* 10. *Maritime* Musicians: Rory Gallagher – vocals, guitar, harmonica Gerry McAvoy – bass guitar Lou Martin – keyboards Rod de'Ath – drums

The companion piece to director Tony Palmer's documentary of the same name, *Irish Tour 1974* was recorded that January in Belfast, Dublin, and Cork at a time when precious few performers -- Irish or otherwise -- were even dreaming of touring the trouble-torn island. Northern Ireland, in particular, was a rock & roll no-go area, but Gallagher never turned his back on the province and was rewarded with what history recalls as some of his best-ever gigs. *Irish Tour 1974*, in turn, captures some of his finest known live recordings and, while it's impossible to tell which songs were recorded where, across nine in-concert recordings (plus one after-hours jam session, "Back on My Stompin' Ground"), the energy crackling from stage to stalls and back again packs an intensity that few live albums -- Gallagher's own others among them -- can match. Highlights of a stunning set include dramatic takes on Muddy Waters' "I Wonder Who" and Tony Joe White's "As the Crow Flies," a raw acoustic rendering that is nevertheless totally electrifying. A frustratingly brief snip of the classic Shadows-style "Maritime" (aka "Just a Little Bit") plays the album out in anthemic style and then, of course, there's "Walk on Hot Coals," a marathon excursion that posterity has decreed Gallagher's most popular and accomplished statement -- a status that *Irish Tour 1974* does nothing to contradict. It's foolish playing favorites, however. Even more than Gallagher's earlier (1972) *Live in Europe* album, *Irish Tour 1974* confirms Gallagher not simply as the greatest bluesman Ireland ever knew, but as one of the island's greatest-ever performers. The 1999 remaster adds nothing in the way of bonus material (shame), but greatly improves the sound quality. ---Dave Thompson, Rovi

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