

June 1, 2009

Hi guys, here's the AC/DC review. I took the pix.
Hope yr all ok, talk soon, Big P-

Caption: AC/DC conquer the galaxy and whatever else is out there
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Anyone who says rock'n'roll is bad for you, causes delinquency in youth, creates anti-social behaviour and is generally an ugly art form has never seen AC/DC play live. A more mentally and physically healthy group of middle-aged guys I've never seen before in my life. They are trim and clear-eyed with pinkish-hued facial complexions and have musical playing ability that is accurate to the nonosecond. The drummer smokes too much, but that's about it as far as bad habits go.

Their concert at the industrial-park sized OAKA stadium on May 28 was nothing less than a mega-titanic celebration of roaring middle-years craziness, that has been honed to perfection after 35 years of playing the most infectious, ear-friendly, sing-along stomp rock ever created. Every song delivered to the crowd had us mesmerized while simultaneously jackhammering every individuals' parasympathetic nervous systems into intensive neck-bop mode. The ensuing result was roughly 70,000 gaga-zombies in a mammoth sports arena, spazzing-out uncontrollably and loving every minute of it.

The gigantic stage, designed by Mark Fisher, who created Pink Floyd's *The Wall* tour show, had every imaginable hi-viz gimmick in the book: lasers, flash-pots, dry ice clouds and butane fireball puffs were everywhere. Colossal movie screens were used to broadcast the players' stage antics in the most high-definition, state-of-the-art, visually crispy-crunchy lushness imaginable. And the best part of all; I mean really the best part of it all, was the fact that they didn't need any of it to put on a 100% ball-busting show. They could have walked out on stage with just their guitars and small amps and still absolutely demolished the place with their pathos, street style and raw-power ensemble playing ability alone. Make no mistake, the total package show was unbelievably entertaining, but they could have pulled it off just with their chops, which is the true litmus test of greatness.

To be sure it was a greatest-hits package with a few nuggets from their newest album *Black Ice* thrown into the mix. It was mostly a golden-age set list wich included the classics *Back in Black*, *Dirty Deeds Done Dirt Cheap*, *Hell's Bells*, *You Shook Me*, *Let There Be Rock*, and the encore blow-outs *Highway to Hell* and *For Those About To Rock*. I have been going to rock shows for nearly 40 years and have never witnessed such audience connection to a band. If Angus Young, the band's legendary lead guitarist, had instructed us to attack Albania during his time on stage, I'm reasonably sure Tirana would be in flames as I write this article.

Speaking of Angus Young, whatever he's doing to keep himself lean and mean, it's working perfectly. He still speed-scuttles, bops and duck walks across the stage like an insect with an abdomen full of methamphetamine. His chops can still put any guitarist, young or old, to shame. He still moons the audience, has mock temper tantrums like a spoiled, private school brat and masticates his chewing gum while ripping the mother-of-pearl inlay off the fretboard of his famous Gibson SG guitar. AC/DC goes right to the top of the Sonic Boomtown live-show Top-10 chart for 2009.

Oftentimes in rock, major bands will hire a not-so-talented support group to open their road shows. It is a trick used to get the audience stoked to see the headline band. By putting some lame group on stage

first, you pump the bloodlust of the crowd to get the goofball band off the stage to make room for the main event. It's not unlike in ancient Roman times, where in the Colosseum, they fed a few Christians to the lions before the big gladiatorial games started, to whet the audience's appetite for the big show. It takes a band with great self-confidence and intelligence to have a really exciting, attention-commanding group play before them. AC/DC's choice of the Answer, an Irish hard rock/boogie band to open for them, proves they are not afraid to have some competition in their camp to keep themselves sharp and hungry on the road.

The four-man hard-riff, crunch-rockers from Belfast play 4:4 backbeat nuggets with great drive and revved-up, third-gear intensity. They're an Irish band in the tradition of the great Thin Lizzy. All songs have a nice, engine-chugging, reverberated arena-style feel to them. The Answer kept the crowd on its feet for their nearly hour-long set. Their newest CD, *Everyday Demons* is definitely worth checking out. And, as a side note, many dads brought their 10-11-12 years old sons to see the show this evening. The next generation of AC/DC fans are being groomed as we speak, to keep the fires burning for the next many years to come. Rock and roll is here to stay boys and girls. It's loud, it's intense and it will never, ever die.