

THE MADEIRA

SONIC CATAclySM - LIVE

CD

Double Crown Records DCCD54; USA 2014; 61 min

intro / Tribal Fury / Everybody Up! / Surf Fidelis / Cities Of Gold / Witch Doctor / Jungle Drums / Burning Mirage / Macarena / Caravela / Farthest Shore / Night Rider / Mar Vista / The Saracen / Tangaroo / Wreak Havoc! / Undercurrents / Ricochet / Sandstorm! / Intruder

Revered surf/instrumental rock band The Madeira have been operating for ten years now and to celebrate they recorded this live album at The Melody Inn in Indianapolis last December. Their four CDs (see Pipelines 71, 75, 78 and 90) are all highly recommended for their quality of style, playing and sound, but even then they hardly prepare you for this, aptly titled, Sonic Cataclysm. My dictionary has cataclysm as a deluge, a momentous event marked by violent upheaval and destruction. Sonic Cataclysm is an explosively powerful blast of reverb guitar, lashing rhythms, pumping bass and furious drums and is surely the best live album of the modern surf age.

The group preview some tracks from their next album, revisit a few favourites from their earlier works and throw in five covers for good measure. These are The Fender IV's *Everybody Up!*, Ernesto Lecuona's *Jungle Drums*, Dick Dale's *Night Rider*, Los Relampagos' *Macarena* (no, not *that* one!) and *Intruder* from Japanese stars The Surf Coasters. Led by Ivan Pongracic, these guys are on top of their game and they have the compositions to match. Writing duties are shared by Ivan and rhythm guitarist Patrick O'Connor, usually alone but clearly allowing the band to help work up their arrangements.

Hard driving *Tribal Fury* sets the scene with Ivan's flying fingers whipping up a storm. The

sound and playing of the surf classic *Everybody Up!* is remarkably true to the original, fans of '60s surf will not be disappointed. *Cities Of Gold* is a real gem that adds balls to the best of the melodic European approach and the jangling *Burning Mirage* is a fiery slice of exotica. Next up are two new songs, a storming reverber in the case of *Caravela* and a pleading uptempo melody in *Farthest Shore*.

There are one or two lighter moments such as *Tangaroo* and *Undercurrents* but The Madeira recall the '60s era of top Australian instrumentalists The Atlantics on the fine driving melody of *Mar Vista* and, guess what, whip up a storm with *Wreak Havoc*. A storming closing sequence begins with the melodic Euro galloper *Ricochet* and builds further with their fiery original *Sandstorm*. The Surf Coasters' *Intruder* provides the six minute finale, and what a tour-de-force it is. Clearly influenced by *Misirlou*-era Dick Dale, it includes just about every trick in the surf guitar book. A fabulous climax to a stunning album.

Highly recommended for fans of surf guitar and of a fiery '60s instrumental style. Even if you already have all of their CDs you still need this one. In fact, if you have them all then you most definitely need this one.

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