

STAIRWAY TO HAZLETON

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WHAT'S GOING UP AND WHAT'S COMING DOWN IN MUSIC AND ENTERTAINMENT



THE LED LEGACY

by John Meyer

Few bands have had as great an influence on the rock medium as Led Zeppelin. Despite the fact that it has been close to ten years since their untimely demise Led Zeppelin remains a hot property: their albums, especially the untitled fourth album, are steady sellers. T-shirts, posters and buttons bearing the Led Zeppelin name can be found in most stores which cater to the rock crowd, and many groups have discovered that they can sell more albums if they even sound remotely like the mighty Zep. Led Zeppelin is one of the few groups, past or present, who can boast such a rabid and ever-growing legion of fans, many of whom were too young to even know what Rock music was when Led Zeppelin was at its peak of popularity during the early 70's.

Perhaps the true testament to Zep's popularity is its influence on fellow musicians. In a recent survey where the magazine Guitar asked several guitarists what album they felt were essential in any guitarists collection. Such players as Steve Vai, Richie Sambora of Bon Jovi, and Slash of Guns & Roses listed one or more Led Zeppelin albums. If the old saying about mimicry being the highest compliment is true, then Whitesnake, in their song "Still of the Night," and Kingdom Come, in their whole act, are really praising the mighty Zep. Groups as diverse as Heart, Kiss, and Crowded House have played Led Zeppelin songs in concert, and The Beastie Boys

even incorporated the main riff from "The Ocean" in one of their rap tunes.

One of the most common gripes heard from the surviving members of the band is that people want to hear Zeppelin songs, and not what they have done since the break-up of the band. Through three solo albums, former lead singer Robert Plant has been trying to escape from the Zeppelin Shadow. In his recent album, Now and Zen he has begun to move back toward the kind of blues-based rock he used to turn out with the Zep. He even includes samples from several Zeppelin songs at the end of "Tall Cool One," and has Jimmy Page playing the solos on two of the songs. In a recent Rolling Stone article Plant explained his change in attitude, "I've stopped appologizing to myself for having this great period of success and fanatical acceptance. It's time to get on and enjoy it now."

Twice in recent years, the surviving members of Led Zeppelin, Page, Plant, and bassist/keyboardist John Paul Jones, reunited, once at Live Aid, and most recently as the closing act at the Atlantic Records 40th Anniversary gala celebration. These reunions are partially responsible for the rumors which have proliferated in recent years of a reunion album and tour; the remaining Zeps emphatically deny such rumors.

While there is little hope of a reformed Led Zeppelin tour and album, their music lives on in a different form in the solo albums of the surviving members, in the songs of the many musicians they influenced, and in the hearts and ears of their many fans.

Guns and Roses/Aerosmith
Teaching Old Dogs New
Tricks?

by Mark Piedmonte

To any concert-goer, August 30, 1988 was like any other sold-out show at Pocono Downs raceway. The grandstands were packed with loud, long-haired, rowdy fans dressed mainly in black T-shirts which depicted their favorite bands. Those more daring congregated on to the race track itself, standing anxiously and impatiently for the extravaganza to begin.

The event that evening was a double-bill, featuring the legendary Aerosmith, who, known for such classics tunes as: "Sweet Emotion", "Same Old Song and Dance", "Walk This Way" (recently re-done by Rap superstars, Run-DMC), and, of course, "Dream On".

Aerosmith (consisting of guitarists Joe Perry and Brad Whitford, Bassist Tom Hamilton, drummer Joey Kramer and Jagger-lipped frontman and lead-vocalist Steven Tyler) have been together since the early '70's, producing such famous albums as Dream On, Hot Rocks and Toys in the Attic. Due to various inclinations, mainly drug abuse, however, Aerosmith underwent many

Years in the later part of the 1970's and early 1980's, remaining virtually silent. They recorded records that didn't sell very well, and their music was unable to match the genius sounds of their earlier achievements.

But, every dog has his day, and some are lucky enough to have it twice. Aerosmith seems to have cleaned up their act and are ready to hit the high road again. The release of 1987's Permanent Vacation has put them back on the charts, spawning such top hits as "Rag Doll", "Angel" and "Dude Looks Like a Lady". The music is fresh and vibrant; proving only that these old boys can still rock 'em like they used to, and nothing proves that better than seeing them live.

From the minute they hit the stage, Steve Tyler and co. strutted their stuff through various arrangements of both older and newer material. Highlights included "Hangman's Jury", featuring intense slide guitar action by Perry, "Angel", a ballad off the new album, and the ever-welcome "Dream On".

All tunes were well-received by the crowd (the above mentioned in particular) and the band was sure to be pleased with the reaction.