

# Reviews



**"Live!"  
Pete Townshend's Deep  
End  
Atco Records  
★★★★**

The Who's final concert tour, completed in 1983, left me with mixed emotions. I was sad that one of my favorite bands was calling it quits but, after hearing "Who's Last," the album taken from that tour, I was glad that the band had enough sense to realize they weren't the band they used to be and decided to stop while they were ahead.

When Pete Townshend released "White City" in 1985, I was overjoyed. "White City" showed that Townshend, the same man who wrote the lines: "I hope I die before I get

old" in the song "My Generation," has actually grown old gracefully and was able to use the experience of age to make more music. Townshend still had a lot to say even if The Who wasn't the best vehicle for his music.

"Live!" is an album taken from the videotape of Townshend's 1986 concert in Brixton, England. A couple of tracks from the concert had been released as b-sides of singles from the "White City" album.

Townshend's solo live version of the Who classic "Magic Bus" was the b-side of the "Give Blood" single. Townshend and Deep End's killer live version of "Won't Get Fooled Again," originally from the Who's 1971 "Who's Next" album was the b-side of the "Face the Face" 12-inch single.

For the concert Townshend assembled a band of top-flight musicians that included

ex-Pink Floyd guitarist David Gilmour, keyboardist John "Rabbit" Bundrick, drummer Simon Phillips, bassist Chucho Merchan, blues harpist Peter Hope Evans, percussionist Judy Linscott, the Kick Horns and a three-man, two-woman choir.

Townshend and the band crank through a choice selection of Townshend's solo material, Who songs and a few covers. The playing is sharp and hot and there is a lot of soul in Townshend's vocals. Townshend is content to stick to rhythm guitar and let Gilmour take the lead passages.

"Live!" kicks off with Robert Barker's "Barefootin,'" a number that would be perfect if you could see Townshend dancing. "After the Fire," a song wrote for Roger Daltrey's 1985 "Under a Raging Moon" album, sounds more gentle and

soulful than Daltrey's version.

Townshend's vocals on "Behind Blue Eyes," a song originally included on The Who's "Who's Next" album, are fantastic. As Daltrey sang it, "Behind Blue Eyes" was an angry declaration from a misunderstood tough guy. As Townshend sings it, "Behind Blue Eyes" becomes a heartfelt plea from a man who is tired of putting up a facade of being tough.

"Stop Hurting People," and "I'm One," both get excellent treatments.

Townshend goes back to his love for old American blues by performing Screamin' Jay Hawkins' "I Put a Spell on You" and Sonny Boy Williamson's "Eyesight to the Blind." Townshend had taken "Eyesight to the Blind" and turned it into a Who song for the band's 1969 "Tommy" album but he goes back to the original to give the

song a traditional treatment for the "Live!" album. The cover version of the Beat's "Save it for Later" shows that Townshend has a good ear for new music as well as the old.

The live version of "Pinball Wizard," a song from The Who's "Tommy" album, proves that Townshend is the fastest guitar strummer in the world. "A Little is Enough," a song from Townshend's 1980 "Empty Glass" album, get a hefty workout as well.

While "White City" showed that Townshend still had a lot to offer as a songwriter, "Live!" shows that Townshend still has a lot to offer as a performer. If you have a VCR, you should get "The Brixton, England Concert" videotape. It has all of the songs listed above and as many more.

—Review by Karl Pallmeyer

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