

## Brainwashed - Acid Mothers Temple & The Melting Paraiso U.F.O., "Live in Occident"

Written by John Kealy

Sunday, 23 October 2011 12:55 - Last Updated Sunday, 23 October 2011 21:37

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Just as I begin to become burned out on Kawabata Makoto and the rest of his musical family, some flash of genius on their part pulls me back in. Most often, this is in the form of a live performance that sets me up for another year or so of worship. In this case, it is a reissue of a long out of print and glorious live album. Documenting the group during a tour of America and Europe in 1999, the classic line-up tear through time and space with some of the finest psychedelic rock to grace any stage at any point.

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One problem I have always had with most Acid Mothers Temple releases is that they usually fail to capture how blisteringly brilliant they are live. Too many of the studio albums sound flat and in disarray compared to their lysergic stage presence. So whenever I come across a live recording, I buy it without checking reviews or sound samples as, more often than not, I get as close to the real deal on disc as possible. *Live in Occident* has been one live album that has eluded me for many years. Originally released as a double LP in 2000, it has been given a CD reissue on Brazil's consistently excellent Essence Music label. The band has remastered this version themselves and, according to them at least, is a big improvement on the mastering job done on the vinyl version. I certainly cannot say it sounds bad at all as it fully captures the chaotic and intense depth of the AMT live sound. The album begins with a textbook opening manoeuvre, drifting Hawkwind-esque synths suddenly exploding, supernova-like, into a live jam that takes off at the speed of light.

The main draws on *Live in Occident* for the dedicated Acid Mothers Temple fan (who presumably does not already own this) are the pieces that do not appear anywhere else. "Astrological Overdrive" sounds pretty much like the title suggests as the band fuse a driving rhythm through a wormhole to find what psychedelic rock would be like in an alternative dimension. The other rarity is "Blue Velvet Blues" which nods to Angelo Badalamenti's '50s-inspired soundtracks for David Lynch while remaining very much under the reins of Makoto and his merry band of minstrels. "Blue Velvet Blues" is just about the highlight for me; it is a hard contest to call but because it does not fit the usual Acid Mothers Temple formula as easily as the others, I definitely think it is a lost classic that should have survived longer in their live

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sets.

Elsewhere, there are equally stunning renditions of Acid Mother staples like "Speed Guru" and "Pink Lady Lemonade." The latter never fails to bring a smile to my face and the group deliver it magnificently here. The song never sounds anything less than fresh, which is presumably why they return to it so frequently as the simple guitar refrain is so evocative and so beguiling that it truly seems to cast a spell over performers and listeners alike. I think that Acid Mothers Temple's continued success is down to pieces like this and their ability to take what could become a saccharine "hit" (in the loosest sense of the term) and transform it every night into something so magical.

*Live in Occident* is without doubt one of the best Acid Mothers Temple live recordings out there and is up there with my two favourite releases by the group ( *Live in Japan* and *Anthem of the Space* ). That this album has not been reissued sooner is a mystery but, then again, there are so many out of print albums by the various incarnations of Acid Mothers Temple and its various spin-offs that are also criminally out of print. It would be nice to see other gems like getting the reissue treatment (especially if Essence Music are involved considering they did a fantastic job here, right down to the solid mini double gatefold sleeve).

samples:

- [Astrological Overdrive](#)
- [Pink Lady Lemonade](#)
- [Blue Velvet Blues](#)