

## The Brussels Affair '73

At last, the Stones have promised to open their vaults, and what a cracker to get the ball rolling. The recordings from Brussels 1973, heavily bootlegged and probably occupying pride of place in any self-respecting Stones fan's collection. So here is a checklist to help you make that all-important decision: whether or not to pay US\$7 to download the recording (US\$9 if you want the files in lossless format).

Reasons why you should Buy The Bootleg:

1. The sound: recorded by Andy Johns (for a possible official release) and mixed by Bob Clearmountain, the sound leaps out of the speakers. Every instrument and the voices are crystal clear (in fact, this could be the very best of the live recordings). Crank up loud and you are practically on stage.
2. Keith's playing: whether he was on no drugs or the right combination of drugs, Keith is sensational. Driving the band, setting the tempo, concentrating on what he does best. And his singing is great, too.
3. Mick's stage outfit: OK, you can't see it, but we can all visualise the glitter and jumpsuit look.
4. The 'nouveaux chansons' (shouldn't that be 'nouvelles', Mick?): these are much better live than on the record. *Dancing with Mr D* has a sumptuous groove, *Heartbreaker* a superb funky workout and *Starfucker* out and out rocks.
5. The finale: that final two minutes of *Street Fighting Man* are completely unlike anything else the Stones have played, fast, furious and far out. Before they got in the (unwelcome) habit of spinning out their final numbers ad nauseam.
6. *Midnight Rambler*: the absolute best version. Period.
7. The horn section: no Jim Price and Bobby Keys, instead Steve Madaio and Tim Lawrence (Bobby Keys was fired half way through the tour). So the sax solos on *Brown Sugar* and *You Can't Always Get What you Want* are unique.
8. Bass drum: Charlie's right foot is a thing of wonder.

9. Price: cheap at half the price. You don't need the disc.

10. And, of course, Mick Taylor: soaring solo on *Angie*, in particular. Keith moaned that the band was getting "too intellectual", which is why he paired up with Ronnie. But having a great lead player definitely has its place within the Stones.

Reasons why you should not Buy the Bootleg:

Er.....none