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Ray Charles: True legend

by Catherine Eisenhauer

The legendary Ray Charles' sneak appearance at the Cohn sold out despite short public notice.

Charles sang country, rock and pop songs, but the unforgettable passion in his voice coloured everything with soul. He sang his most popular R&B hits including his current single "Born to Love Me" from his album "Wish You Were Here Tonight" as well as a wide variety of classic popular songs.

The Ray Charles Orchestra performed for an hour and twenty minutes with true showmanship and musical expertise. The big brass ensemble began the show with an off-beat approach to get the audience in the mood for Charles.

Each sideman took his turn in the limelight and improvised so brilliantly and with such nonchalant charm that, by the end of the warm-up act, I was completely captivated.

It was a tight, well-timed show. Ray Charles pushed everything

along with a professional sparkle and charm which seems almost extinct in today's musical fashion. In the past year, I've seen many musical acts, but none could match the musical depth displayed by Charles. The strength of character to build a legend usually dies or fades away.

One day the media arouses our curiosity about the debut of a new artist, by the next year they have followed another trend or the artist has joined a new band.

Ray Charles never follows trends; he sets them. His success is enduring. Charles was with the audience every "pound" of the way during the concert. He had enough energy to burn out the entire Cohn audience.

The astounding range of Charles' voice could rip your insides apart with emotion. His quick wit could end a sobby blues ballad like "Shame, Shame" with an unexpected poke in the ribs.

The concert left an imprint on my consciousness that I'll never forget.



Hunting for a reason for *Hunters and Collectors*

by David Lutes

Ambitions run wild on *Hunters and Collectors*, the self-titled debut from one of the bands riding the Australian music boom. Unfortunately, ambition does not necessarily make for an abundance of good music. The uncharted direction of most of the cuts far outweighs the occasional flashes of brilliance.

The shadow of Johnny Lydon's Public Image Ltd. looms large over the stripped-down funk sound. Yet the insistent repetitiveness of the music lacks the originality of Pil. Instead of drawing you in and forcing you to listen, it becomes almost irritating. The angst-ridden vocals and the sometimes incomprehensible lyrics don't help matters.

This is not to say that the album is a total failure. Side two shows signs of recovery and is actually fairly interesting. The lead-off cut on the second side, "Talking to a Stranger", is very good. A powerful rhythm line anchors the best vocal outing on the record and highlights some notable guitar and synth work. "Talking to a Stranger" was the band's first Australian Top Twenty hit.

What *Hunters and Collectors* really need is a sense of purpose. Their strange tales of the deep, dark side of human nature seem more contrived than committed. Even those who enjoy the record will have to admit that something is missing. Here's hoping they find it, because they have too much potential to waste.



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