

John Lennon – Live in New York 1972 (1986)

Written by bluesever

Friday, 23 September 2011 18:31 - Last Updated Monday, 21 May 2018 19:51

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1. "New York City" – 3:38 2. "It's So Hard" – 3:18 3. "Woman is the Nigger of the World" – 5:30 4. "Well Well Well" – 3:51 5. "Instant Karma!" – 3:40 6. "Mother" – 5:00 [play](#) 7. "Come Together" – 4:21 8. "Imagine" – 3:17 9. "Cold Turkey" – 5:29 10. "Hound Dog" – 3:09 11. "Give Peace a Chance" – 1:00

[play](#)

Personnel John Lennon: vocals, rhythm guitar, keyboards Yoko Ono: keyboards Jim Keltner: drums + Elephant's Memory: Wayne 'Tex' Gabriel: lead guitar Gary Van Scyoc: bass guitar Stan Bronstein: saxophone Adam Ippolito: keyboards Richard Frank Jr.: drums

John Lennon's concert appearances during his solo years were rare and scattered about, so any live document is worth hearing. Yet this one, the fabled One to One concert at Madison Square Garden, doesn't live up to its legend, however noble the cause (a benefit for the Willowbrook School for Children). Much of the problem, one suspects, is that Lennon concerts tended to be quick, casual one-offs; this material might have really rocked if John had broken the tunes in on the road first. Also, the Plastic Ono Elephants Memory Band is a fairly crude bunch of bashers, with Stan Bronstein's flailing sax and surprisingly poor drumming, despite the support of Jim Keltner. So Lennon is pretty much left to his own devices. In the first few numbers he sounds distracted, not in full command, even disconnected from the band. A core primal scream piece "Well Well Well" is given a perfunctory run-through; "Instant Karma" sounds stiff, with embarrassing drum breaks ("We'll get it right next time," John says); and he makes only one reference to his Beatle past with a heavy-handed "Come Together." Things do improve later on when "Mother" and "Cold Turkey" work up a good lather, and "Hound Dog" is not bad, although the concluding "Give Peace a Chance" is limited to the brief excerpt included on Shaved Fish. Phil Spector was the original producer of the recording, and it's one of his murkier jobs, not nearly as focused as his work on The Concert for Bangla Desh in the very same arena the year before. More from the concert, including some of Yoko's numbers, can be found on the companion video cassette released at the same time. ---Richard S. Ginell, AllMusic Review

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