

Led Zeppelin – Coda (1993)

Written by bluesever

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1. *"We're Gonna Groove (Live)"* King, Bethea 2:40
2. *"Poor Tom"* Page, Plant 3:03
3. *"I Can't Quit You Baby (Live)"* Dixon 4:17
4. *"Walter's Walk"* Page, Plant 4:31
5. *"Ozone Baby"* Page, Plant 3:35
6. *"Darlene"* Bonham, Jones, Page, Plant 5:06
7. *"Bonzo's Montreux"* Bonham 4:17
8. *"Wearing and Tearing"* Page, Plant 5:31
9. *"Baby Come On Home"* Berns, Page, Plant 4:30
10. *"Travelling Riverside Blues"* Johnson, Page, Plant 5:11
11. *"White Summer/Black Mountain Side"* Page 8:01
12. *"Hey Hey What Can I Do"* Bonham, Jones, Page, Plant 3:55

Led Zeppelin John Bonham – drums, percussion John Paul Jones – bass guitar, piano, keyboards Jimmy Page – acoustic and electric guitar, production, electronic treatments
Robert Plant – lead vocals, harmonica

Led Zeppelin had dissolved and John Bonham had died a little over two years before Coda was released November 19, 1982. It was cobbled together from unused tracks that covered the band's career. Whether intended or not, it ended up as a nice presentation of the development of their sound.

Why the album was actually released is open to question. One possible reason was to officially issue some of their tracks that were being bootlegged. Another reason may have been that the band owed their label one more album, and Coda fulfilled their contract.

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The main weakness is the lack of any memorable or essential tracks, although the final one comes close. It is an album comprised of mostly good material that for one reason or another was left off previous albums.

Side one of the original vinyl release includes two covers of old blues tunes, and both were recorded January 9, 1970 at the same concert at The Royal Albert Hall in London. "We're Gonna Groove" is a Ben E. King tune and at 2:42 is one of the tightest live tracks that Zeppelin would produce. "I Can't Quit You Baby" was a Willie Dixon composition made famous by Otis Rush. The song has been inducted into The Blues Hall Of Fame. It is basic 12-bar blues and a perfect vehicle for Jimmy Page.

"Poor Tom" was a Page/Plant composition that was left off of their third album. The lyrics are somewhat of a mess but the acoustic work by Page almost saves the day. "Walter's Walk" was left off of Houses Of The Holy. It is John Bonham's drumming that is the best thing about this performance.

Side two features three productions eliminated from the In Through The Out Door sessions. "Ozone Baby" is a competent up-tempo rocker. "Darlene" is more interesting with nice piano runs by John Paul Jones and some rockabilly type guitar from Page.

The gem of the album and a song that deserved better is "Wearing and Tearing," which closes the album and Led Zeppelin's studio career. It is one of the hardest rockers of their career and was recorded at the height of the punk rock era in Europe.

The eighth track was a drum solo by Bonham titled "Bonzo's Montreux," which Page added instrumental backing too after the fact. It remains the least satisfying track.

Coda may not be the most exciting album and is among the weakest in the Led Zeppelin catalogue, yet it was a good way to fill in some of their career gaps. It is an acceptable listen but is mainly for Led Zeppelin fans who want everything. --- blogcritics.org

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