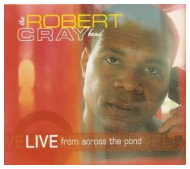
The Robert Cray Band – Live From Across The Pond (2006)



1.Phone Booth 4:38 2.Poor Johnny 6:22 3.Our Last Time 8:23 4.Right Next Door (Because Of Me) 6:02 5. 12 Year Old Boy 6:28 6.I Guess I Showed Her 4:40 7.The Things You Do To Me 7:02 + 8.I Was Warned 8:36 9.Twenty 7:34 10./Bad Influence 3:58 11.The One In The Middle 8:20 12.Back Door Slam 5:27 13.Time Makes Two 6:18 14.I'm Walkin' 5:23 Bass – Karl Sevareid Drums – Kevin Hayes Guitar, Vocals, Producer – Robert Cray Keyboards – Jim Pugh

Live from Across the Pond finds blues guitarist Robert Cray and his band performing live over seven nights in May 2005 at the Royal Albert Hall in London. A journeyman guitarist with a knack for mixing a classic electric blues sound with various contemporary pop sounds, Cray has remained a consistent if underappreciated artist since his 1986 crossover/breakthrough album Strong Persuader. Recorded on the heels of the similarly stellar studio effort Twenty, this two-disc set features Cray and co. in superb form moving from straight-up blues, to soul-infused pop and gutbucket ballads. For longtime fans and newcomers alike, Live from Across the Pond works well as both an encapsulation and introduction to Cray's unique, eclectic blues sound.
---Matt Collar, AllMusic Review

Twenty-six years after issuing his debut, Robert Cray finally has gotten around to releasing a live album. Unfortunately, he might have waited a tad too long. Although he makes every attempt to push the bulk of the material to its limit, there are frustratingly long portions of the two-disc, 14-track Live from Across the Pond that sound like the work of a seasoned professional. The entirety of the affair was recorded during Cray’s recent engagement with Eric Clapton at London’s Royal Albert Hall, and for the most part, he and his backing band deliver the songs from the perspective of a support act that is so focused upon not making any major

mistakes that it also fails to take any risks.

Although the songs on Live from Across the Pond are solidly performed, their emotional resonance is undercut by the formulaic sterility of Cray and his ensemble's approach. Nevertheless, there are moments scattered throughout the set when the group springs to life. The title tune from Twenty, his recent studio endeavor, for example, is a haunting, mournful lament, and the concise, Sam Cooke-inspired radiance of Bad Influence provides the affair with a much-needed change of pace. Elsewhere, Cray's blazing lead burns through the latter halves of 12-Year-Old Boy, I Was Warned, and The One in the Middle. Likewise, he and keyboard player Jim Pugh inspire each other, thereby igniting Our Last Time's central jam. In the end, however, Live from Across the Pond is so safe and unassuming that it is as certain to appease Cray's longtime fans as it is unlikely to win over his detractors. ---John Metzger, musicbox-online.com

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