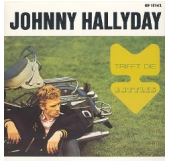
Johnny Hallyday - Trifft Die Rattles (1984)



01 - Mein Leben fängt erst richtig an
02 - Lass die Leute doch reden
03 - Wilde Boys
04 - Das alte Haus in New Orleans
05 - Ma Guitare *play*
06 - Aber nur mit mir
07 - Ja der Elefant
08 - It's Monkeytime
09 - Vielleicht bist du für mich noch nicht die grosse Liebe (feat. Sylvie Vartan)

Johnny Hallyday was France's first and only full-fledged rock star. Other French artists may have been influenced by rock & roll, but none was as beholden to the original sources, or as enduringly successful, as Hallyday. He was a distinctly French phenomenon, never achieving recognition in the U.S. or U.K.; certainly, part of the reason was that a good chunk of his repertoire consisted of French-language covers of early American rock hits. Moreover, his appropriations of Elvis Presley and James Dean captured the French imagination, but -- language barrier aside -- were often too stylized and imitative to resonate with audiences used to the genuine article. Yet even if his musical interpretations lacked some of the punch of their sources, his sense of rock & roll style, with all its rebellious trappings, was impeccable. His stage presence was undeniably electric, and his life was the stuff of which tabloid reporters' dreams are made: high-profile romances (and breakups), cocaine use, chronic tax problems, a taste for auto racing and motorcycles, and other assorted fallouts from life in the fast lane. In the end, though, Hallyday's appeal rested on a central balancing act: he may have been fascinated by a foreign cultural phenomenon, but he managed to maintain his essential Frenchness. His covers provided a way for American rock & roll to conquer France, adapting it to fit the country's own sensibilities without threatening its well-protected cultural autonomy. His later move into quintessentially French balladry helped increase his cross-generational appeal, and somewhat mirrored the career trajectory of his hero Elvis. With a career of several decades behind him,

and sales figures in the tens of millions, the unconditionally adored Hallyday still ranks among France's greatest cultural icons.

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