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Lene Lovich - Live From New York at Studio 54 Review

by Kevin Wierzbicki

In a brief segment of this film where patrons of the show are asked what they think of Lene Lovich one concertgoer says, "I like her because she's a natural spazz." The young lady meant the comment as a compliment and I doubt that Lovich would have taken offense.

Sporting lengthy Heidi-style pigtails and wearing an exaggerated doll dress, Lovich was not necessarily out of character considering that this show was shot in 1981 as the New Wave splashed through. But Lovich often puts her face through contortions, puffing her cheeks and turning wild-eyed, looking at some points like a rock'n'roll version of Lucille Ball.

This film has its faults---the stage is not adequately lit for filming and the cuts are a bit awkward at times. The footage has also been laden with effects that seem mostly pointless; there are a few psychedelic overlays that are kind of cool but elsewhere multiple screen "freezes" are just detracting.

Still there's plenty here to dig if you like Lovich---she blows a little rudimentary sax on "Joan," acts the dervish on the New Wave polka of "Say When" and gets a little teary on a song for her mother, "Too Tender (To Touch)." On a couple of songs she displays her throaty bird call/coyote yelp which sounds downright eerie when the soundman throws a little distortion on it. Favorites "Lucky Number" and "New Toy" are performed and if you look (and listen) closely you'll note a Mr. Thomas Dolby on synthesizer.

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