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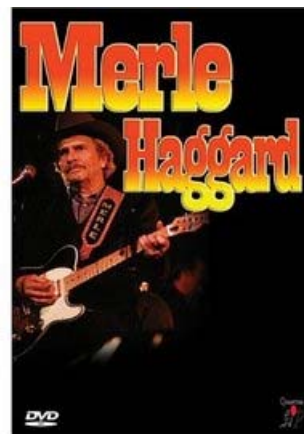
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Merle Haggard – Live 1983



(DVD-Video/MVD/Quantum Leap)

Picture: C- Sound: C- Extras: C- Concert: C+

Merle Haggard is one of the great Country & Western artists, who caught a break in the mid-1960s and by the 1970s was hot enough to crossover to the national Pop chart with his Top 30 hit *If We Make It Through December* in 1974. Establishing himself as one of the "outlaws" of the genre, Pop success was very rare, but he was huge on the country charts and sold millions of albums. This new DVD concert from an Orlando, Florida concert in 1983 shows the survivor in prime form. Too bad the disc is problematic.

Songs here include:

- 1) *Twinkle Twinkle Little Star*
- 2) *If You Want To be My Woman*
- 3) *Workin' Man Blues*
- 4) *Always Late*
- 5) *TB Blues*
- 6) *Folsom Prison Blues*
- 7) *Footlights*
- 8) *Big City*
- 9) *Mama Tried*
- 10) *Medley: Brain Cloudy Blues/Milk Cow Blues*
- 11) *Begging To Yoy*
- 12) *The Bottle Let Me Down*
- 13) *What Am I Gonna Do?*
- 14) *Ida Red*
- 15) *San Antonio Rose*
- 16) *Corinna Corinna*
- 17) *Take Me Back To Tulsa*

- 18) *Faded Love, A Maiden's Prayer*
- 19) *Fiddle Breakdown*
- 20) *Right Or Wrong*
- 21) *Ramblin' Fever*
- 22) *That's The Way Love Goes*
- 23) *Today I Started Loving You Again*
- 24) *Okie From Muskogee*
- 25) *The Fighting Side Of Me*

To this day, some of those songs (like #24) are still controversial, but what is especially interesting is to see Country that has not been cleansed of... well, Country! Never a big fan of Country, when I compare this music to the current watered-down version, I have a new respect and appreciation by default. Though it is nice to see real and hear real Country Music, I will not be buying any Haggard box sets anytime soon. Still, you can see why his work is still in demand over forty years later.

The 1.33 X 1 image was shot on NTSC analog video and this copy is so many generations down that it is amazing it holds its color. It is very, very soft, with color bleeding, detail issues and fuzziness throughout. The Dolby Digital 2.0 Mono is compressed, stuffy and shows its age, somehow not warping. The combination is for diehard fans of Haggard only. No extras unless you count previews for other titles from the same company.

It should also be noted that this lasts only 45 minutes and not 80 as the box claims.

- Nicholas Sheffo

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