



AC/DC

© 1995 AC/DC



ANGUS YOUNG
THE AC/DC SINGERS



ENTERTAINMENT WEEKLY



Certain things in life are inarguable.
Happiness feels good. Fire burns.
Breathing is necessary.
AC/DC rocks.

In a world filled with change, there's something profoundly reassuring about AC/DC. They're like a James Bond film—a winning formula, unvarying, but packed with local color, big explosions and loving glances at busty babes. You go in knowing what to expect, and you're never disappointed. The boys are as fit and rockin' as ever on the 27th album of their long and legendary career. Never ones to pass up an opportunity for an oblique phallic reference, they called it *Stiff Upper Lip*. Released in February of 2008, it was the album that brought AC/DC into the 21st Century. *Stiff Upper Lip* came as a much-welcomed, high-decibel declaration that—whatever else the new millennium might bring—great rock and roll was still alive and kicking. Within days of its release, the album's title track jumped into the upper reaches of Billboard's Mainstream Rock chart. The song's hot and nasty guitar riff sets the tone for the entire album. Singer Brian Johnson starts down in his rarely-heard low register, growling a swamp croak mating call:

...and I wish you ladies, I wish you the big
I was born with a stiff upper lip."

The downbeat thracks, "Jesus" starts screeching and your speakers begin rockin' off the shelf. But there's no denying that *Stiff Upper Lip* is one of the ripped-back bluesiest albums in the entire AC/DC canon.

"With us it's whatever comes natural," says diminutive lead guitarist Angus Young. "And, right from the very first album, AC/DC has had songs like 'The Jack,' which are blues based. We've also done it on 'Dirty Deeds,' when we went into the blues. Blues is a big part of rock and roll. The best rock and roll has got its birth in the blues."

The world would be a duller place without AC/DC anthems like "Whole Lotta Rock," "Highway to Hell," "You Shook Me All Night Long," "Dirty Deeds," "For Those About to Rock," "Thunderstruck," "Moneytalks" and "Hard as a Rock." The band came blasting out of Australia in 1975 and have shown no sign of slowing down ever since. AC/DC's recipe for timeless rock is based on the mutually tight guitar work and hook-wise song craft of the brothers Angus and Malcolm Young. Early AC/DC recordings like *Powerage* and *Let There Be Rock*, produced by Angus and Malcolm's older brother George and his partner Harry Vanda (both veterans of States hit makers the Easybeats), established the band as a force to be reckoned with in the late Seventies. They suffered a grave setback in 1980, with the



AC/DC

Stiff Upper Lip

Let's not piss about. You can debate this and argue that but certain things we hold to be self-evident and one of those things is that AC/DC are the fuckin' greatest.

Chuck away everything ever broadly produced in the name of rock'n'roll except AC/DC and, I dunno, maybe James Brown and Muddy Waters, and you've still got all you'll ever need when the only thing to get you through is one





Getting their bell rung

Fans feel the power as AC/DC deliver a knockout



alcohol-related death of their original singer Bon Scott. But AC/DC soldiered on valiantly, drafting Brito-rooted grazer Brian Johnson, who joined the band in time to make the all-time classic *Back in Black* and went on to shirk his way into the hearts of AC/DC fans everywhere.

Rhythm sections had fluctuated, but *Stiff Upper Lip* finds original member Phil Rudd as drums, with Cliff Williams—a member since '77—on bass. Sessions for the album brought the band together once again with George Young, along with producing AC/DC's first six albums. George had also worked with the lads on 1980's *Who Made Who* and 1985's *Blow Up Your Video*. For the making of *Stiff Upper Lip*, he once again found himself in the producer's seat.

"But this was the first time George was on his own producing the band," Brian Johnson points out. "In the past, George and Harry Vanda always worked as a pair. No detracting from Harry, but it was great with the three brothers working together."

Stiff Upper Lip went down to tape at the Vancouver Studio in Vancouver, British Columbia. A decade earlier, the Canadian city had been the site of sessions for 1990's *The Razor's Edge* with celebrated rock producer Bruce Fairbairn at his Little Mountain Studios. But *Stiff Upper Lip* was more of a family affair.

"We were working pretty hard actually," Johnson recalls. "Through Saturdays and all. We worked from 11 AM till one in the morning sometimes. It was good, though. George always had a game plan." Vancouver



AC/DC: Always current



2015



is a great love," Angus adds. "It's got a great vibe to it. And the studio we went in had a great sound. The Warehouse it was called. Nice name, too."

"Yeah," Brian leans; "it was originally owned by a dykeish pimp."

Still Upper Lip was the first studio album AC/DC had made since 1993's *Ballbreaker*, so Ang and Mal had about five years to amass a cache of killer tunes. The idea for "Still Upper Lip," says Angus, "sprang into my head when I was stuck in a traffic jam once. I was thinking that one of the earliest images of rock and roll that I'd ever seen was Elvis Presley, who always had that big old lip sticking straight up in the air. That sucker, you know? And that's something that's carried straight through rock and roll. Hendrix, Jagger... they all had that thing with the lip. It carried over into the fashion world, too. Nowadays, models gotta get



collagen sticks in if they ain't got it."

Angus's guitar comes to the fore, dealing deadly, infectious, hammered-on hooks from hell on "Heat Seeks Back" and "Can't Stand Still."

The latter track is a masterpiece of stripped-down, rock and roll simplicity—a restraining, straightforward 12-bar delivered straight from the gut.

"Aye, that's one of my favorites," Brian confesses.

"I don't think I've heard anything like that played that well before. It just gets me all goose-bumpy every time I hear it."

Judging from the whoops of approval heard at the end of the song, it's clear the band dug Brian's performance as well. "Every time we'd go in and cut a track, Brian was always singing along with us," Angus recalls. "And on that one, he was really hammering

it out. We were getting off watching him do it. So when you come to the ending, everybody sort of dropped tools and gave him a little roars."

No AC/DC album would be complete without some reference to the infernal realms, and "Damned" is a proud successor to "Hell Is Belts," "Back and Forth Damnation," "Hell Ain't A Bad Place To Be" and of course "Highway To Hell." Rio had the coming of the millennium dampened

AC/DC's adolescent itch for off-color puns. With its head-bows, slow-burn grooves, "Come And Get It" is most likely not a summons to the dinner table.

Originally a tongue-in-cheek take on Mayor Rudolph Giuliani's newly cleaned up, gilded Manhattan, "Safe In New York City" has acquired a new kind of urgency in the post-9/11 world. "For me personally, New York has always been a city of expectability," said Angus at the time *Back In Black* was released. "I've always viewed it as a place where you can never guess what's gonna happen next."

Times may change, but as long as AC/DC are around, you can be sure that rock and roll is safe in New York City or anywhere else in the universe. So crank it up, strap on your sit guitar and enjoy.



Live in Paris

AC/DC



- 1) **STIFF UPPER LIP** 3:25
- 2) **MELTDOWN** 3:41
- 3) **HOUSE OF JAZZ** 3:56
- 4) **HOLD ME BACK** 3:58
- 5) **SAFE IN NEW YORK CITY** 4:00
- 6) **CAN'T STAND STILL** 3:41
- 7) **CAN'T STOP ROCK 'N' ROLL** 4:02
- 8) **SATELLITE BLUES** 3:47
- 9) **DAMNED** 3:52
- 10) **COME AND GET IT** 4:00
- 11) **ALL SCREWED UP** 4:37
- 12) **GIVE IT UP** 3:53

All songs written by A. Young/B. Young
 All songs published by J. Albert & Son (Pty) Ltd

BACUS YOUNG: Lead Guitar
BALCOLM YOUNG: Rhythm Guitar
ESGAN JOHNSON: Vocals
CLIFF WILLIAMS: Bass Guitar
PHIL ROOZE: Drums



Produced by George Young

Engineered and Mixed by Mike Foster

Assistant Engineer: Dean Walter

Equipment Technicians: Richard Jones, Geoff Banks and Rick St. Pierre

Recorded at The Warehouse Studio, Vancouver, B.C., Canada

Mastered by George Marino at Sterling Sound, New York

Original Album Art Direction and Design: All

Statis Concept and Photography: Mike Dean Sam

Photo Producer: Tansel T. Watkins

Water Sculpted by: SAG Effects - Mark Alfrey, Stan Lok

Digital Retouching: Eric Altshanger

Reissue Booklet Design: Smokey Vision

Photography: Inside Digital (left: 2, 3, 4 (right), 8 (bottom left), 11, 13, 14 & back of booklet);
 George Olin; Inside Digital (right: Bob King/Wallace/Winter; pages 6 & 8; Martin
 Phillips/Wallace/Winter; pages 9 (left) & 7; Jeffrey Hayes/Winter; page 9 (right);
 Jon Bauer/Wallace/Winter; page 8 (top left); Debbie Smyth/Winter; page 8;
 © John McMorris/Winter; pages 10 & 11; Kelly A. Smith/Winter

Additional artwork courtesy Albert Productions and Arnold Gordon

This CD takes advantage of ConnectO technology and will work as a key to unlock exclusive bonus
 music, videos, photos and more at www.acdcrocks.com

www.acdcrocks.com • www.sonybmg.com/au

SONY BMG **[ALBERT]**

© 2005 Sony Music Entertainment (Pty) Ltd. All Rights Reserved. Produced by George Young. Engineered and Mixed by Mike Foster. Assistant Engineer: Dean Walter. Equipment Technicians: Richard Jones, Geoff Banks and Rick St. Pierre. Recorded at The Warehouse Studio, Vancouver, B.C., Canada. Mastered by George Marino at Sterling Sound, New York. Original Album Art Direction and Design: All. Statis Concept and Photography: Mike Dean Sam. Photo Producer: Tansel T. Watkins. Water Sculpted by: SAG Effects - Mark Alfrey, Stan Lok. Digital Retouching: Eric Altshanger. Reissue Booklet Design: Smokey Vision.