

# Fleetwood Mac at the Grande

Tony Reay

1969

For anyone who wanted a late Christmas present, the Fleetwood Mac at the Grande Ballroom provided a good one. Score one against all the Blue Cheer fans who said the Mac were “another British blues group.”

But, for those of you who didn't see them, go the next time. I always find it amazing when so many people in the hierarchy of the group world treat music as something which means something to them and nothing to others.

All those who say Jeremy Spencer's Elvis bit will realize that the Mac aren't blues purists, although their blues playing is, to my mind, much purer than that of many groups who claim not to play anything but blues. Even down to Spencer's imitation of John Mayall's soul-straining voice on “Leaping Christine,” along with the matching facial, “pained” expression, the Mac proved to be more than the usual “Les Paul/Marshall” combo.

I know of at least one person who is going to say to me “But who invented rock and roll?” meaning that copiers are to be ignored and treated like untalented carbons. The USA may have invented and popularized rock and roll, but how many of its groups are still playing? Sure, the old greats still are, but when did you last hear the Airplane or the Iron Butterfly or any of their clansmen do anything bordering on the excitement generated by such numbers as “Blue Suede Shoes” or “Ready Teddy?”

Peter Green is a very creative artist. Other than being able to play blues like the proverbial motherfucker, his talents are spread across singing (and very well, too), playing the harmonica proficiently and composing good music. If you haven't heard “Albatross,” then buy “English Rose” and you'll know what I mean. Jeremy Spencer defies description.

The Fleetwood Mac have a description. To those who think it's “another British blues group,” you're wrong. Fleetwood Mac is simply the hardest tightest group you are ever likely to see. The next is Terry Reid. He'll be back soon. Go see him; he's worth it.



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