

## Iggy & The Stooges - The Weirdness (2007)



A1 *Trollin'* 3:06 A2 *You Can't Have Friends* 2:22 A3 *A.T.M* 3:15 A4 *My Idea Of Fun* 3:17 A5 *The Weirdness* 3:45 A6 *Free & Freaky* 2:39 B1 *Greedy Awful People* 2:07 B2 *She Took My Money* 3:48 B3 *The End Of Christianity* 4:19 B4 *Mexican Guy* 3:29 B5 *Passing Cloud* 4:04 B6 *I'm Fried* 3:44 Bass – Mike Watt Drums – Scott Asheton Guitar – Ron Asheton Saxophone – Steve Mackay Vocals – Iggy Pop

The creative and interpersonal dynamics of a rock band are notoriously tricky, and when a band hasn't worked together for a few decades, simply getting the same people together in a recording studio doesn't guarantee lightning is going to strike again. In 2003, more than 30 years after the original lineup of the Stooges collapsed after the commercial failure of *Fun House*, Iggy Pop finally buried the hatchet with his former bandmates Ron Asheton and Scott Asheton, and they hit the road for a series of heroic reunion shows (with Mike Watt standing in on bass for the late Dave Alexander) in which they miraculously re-created the dinosaur-stomp sound and feel of their first two albums. After the riotous reception of the Stooges' reunion shows, Iggy and the Ashetons took the next logical step and recorded a new Stooges album, but while the reconstituted band sounded stunning on-stage (check out the *Telluric Chaos* CD or the *Live in Detroit 2003* DVD for evidence), in the studio the Stooges reunion went horribly awry with 2007's *The Weirdness*. It would have been foolish to expect *The Weirdness* to sound just like *The Stooges* or *Fun House*, given how much water has flowed under the bridge, but what's startling is how little this album recalls the primal groove of their previous work (or the sound they recently delivered on-stage). While Ron Asheton's guitar howls as loud as ever, the pulsating wah-wah and ripsaw fuzz that were his aural trademarks are all but missing, and while his solos step back into the noisy id, they lack the coherence and internal logic of his brilliant work on *Fun House*. Similarly, Scott Asheton's drumming is muscular and his timing is superb, but while he created an unexpectedly sensuous groove out of stuff like "Down in the Street," "1969," and "Real Cool Time," here he stomps away with lots of gravity but little nuance, and like his brother, he's traded soul for jackhammer force (emphasized by Steve Albini's hard-edged recording). But surprisingly, the guy who really drops the ball on this set is Iggy. Pop's been in fine voice on his last few solo albums, but much of *The Weirdness* finds him singing a bit flat or sharp, and while he belts out these songs with commendable passion, this

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ranks with Beat Em Up as the dumbest set of lyrics the man has ever committed to tape. Instead of reaching into the Real O Mind for the cosmic simplicity of stuff like "TV Eye," "1970," or "I Wanna Be Your Dog," Iggy goes into inane blather mode from the jump-start, and if titles like "Greedy Awful People," "Free and Freaky," and "I'm Fried" don't tip off listeners that he's off his game, lines like "England and France, these cultures are old/The cheese is stinky and the beer isn't cold," "They drive those f\*ckin' awful cars/And roll their lips in titty bars," and the deathless "My dick is turning into a tree" tell the rest of the story. ---Mark Deming, allmusic.com

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