

Stuck in Folsom

The Man In Black's classic gets revisited once more.

BY LEE ZIMMERMAN



JOHNNY CASH

At Folsom Prison:
Legacy Edition
(Columbia/Legacy)

www.legacyrecordings.com



The landmark album that was culled from the first of Johnny Cash's two concerts at California's notorious Folsom Prison has been hailed as one of the most riveting live recordings ever conceived. Now, forty years after that auspicious event, an enhanced edition of *Johnny Cash At Folsom Prison* affirms that assertion. Bolstering the album's original incarnation with 31 previously unreleased tracks spread over two CDs, this bonus bonanza encompasses the whole of both Folsom concerts, including the rousing warm-up performances from Carl Perkins and the Statler Brothers. The result's not only a significant upgrade over the 1999 reissue (which managed only three measly add-ons) but an essential compilation for even the most casual Cash collector.

While skeptics might grouse that the songs from the second set vary only marginally from the first, the inclusion of Cash's comments — expletives and all — help confirm his connection to the

convicts. Indeed, the prisoner perspective taken on "Busted," "Cocaine Blues," "25 Minutes to Go," "Green, Green Grass Of Home" and the made-for-the occasion anthem "Folsom Prison Blues" reinforce the fact that Cash was navigating a narrow divide between rebellion and redemption.

As added incentive, the set also includes a lengthy DVD that scans archival footage, photos and interviews with those who were there and people that were closest to Cash — among them, Merle Haggard, Rosanne Cash, Marty Stuart and members of Cash's backing band. The documentary weaves together Cash's backstory with a revealing peek into prison life and the turbulent tales of those whose lives were affected by that fateful day. Taken in tandem with the detailed liner notes by Cash biographer Michael Streissguth, it provides a compelling commentary on a pivotal performance that resonates even today.

STANDOUT TRACKS: "Jackson," "Green, Green Grass of Home"

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Jim Marshall