

L. Kent Wolgamott: Digging T. Rex on their Rock & Roll Hall of Fame induction

[L. Kent Wolgamott](#) Nov 12, 2020

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I'd forgotten how much I like T. Rex until I was watching the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame induction show on HBO on Sunday night.

Now available on HBO On Demand and streaming on HBO Max, the show is the COVID-19 replacement for the usual induction ceremony. Ordinarily, honorees are introduced by a celebrated peer, deliver what passes for an acceptance speech and play a few songs with a jam session to wrap up the evening.

That wasn't possible this year. So the 35th class went into the Rock Hall with short films sketching the lives and careers of the inductees, capped by a remotely filmed acceptance speech.

While it was missing the music, which is often the best part of the ceremony, the video version in some ways worked better than the live, in-person ceremony in providing looks at the honorees — Depeche Mode, the Doobie Brothers, Whitney Houston, Nine Inch Nails, The Notorious B.I.G., T. Rex and managers Irving Azoff and Jon Landau — that illuminated why they were deserving of induction.

That, sadly, is likely most needed for T. Rex, which, in 2020, is largely unknown or forgotten in the U.S.

You have likely heard the British band's only American hit "Get It On (Bang a Gong)." But Marc Bolan and his band were never U.S. rock stars.

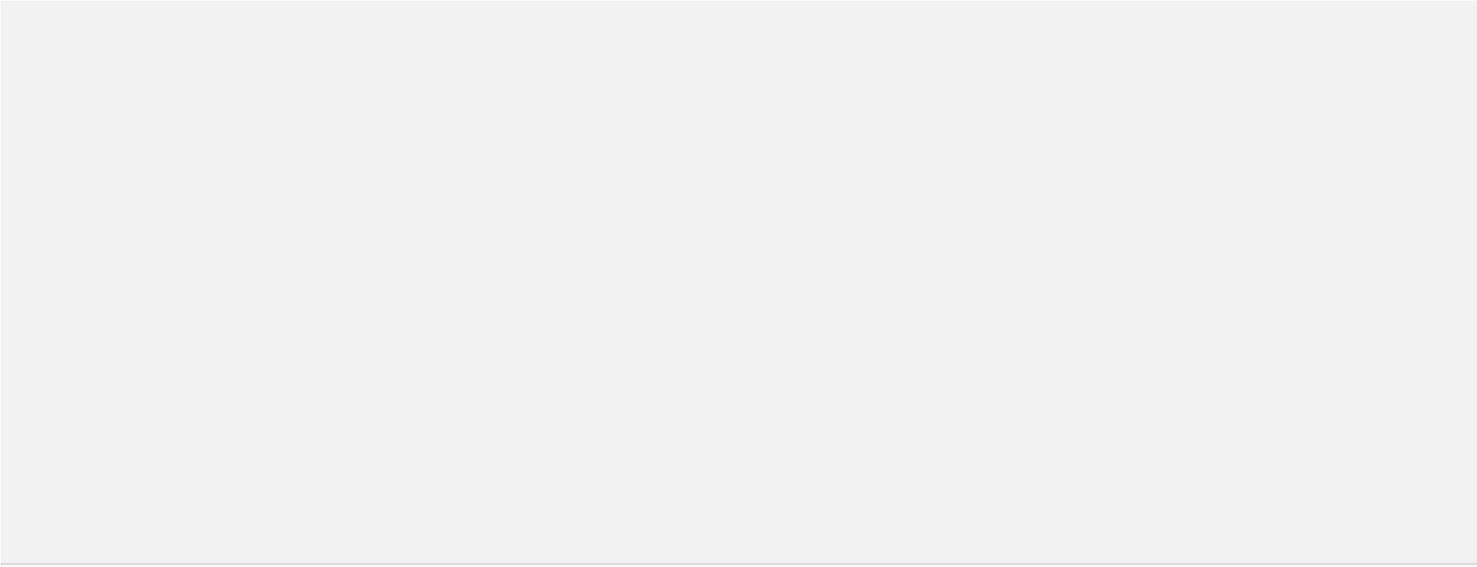
When Bolan took out the electric guitar and transformed his hippie folk duo Tyrannosaurus Rex into a rock 'n' roll boogie band, T. Rex became a mainstay on the U.K. charts and founded — with all due respect to rival David Bowie — what came to be called glam rock.

In doing so, they made a pair of great albums, 1971's "Electric Warrior" and in 1972, "The Slider," which on its cover featured a picture of Bolan wearing a top hat, with his hair curling out underneath — a look Slash of Guns N' Roses flat out stole.

So it's appropriate that a top hat floats on the cover of "Angelheaded Hipster: The Songs of Marc Bolan & T. Rex," an album released earlier this year that features 26 songs from the 1968-77 Tyrannosaurus Rex and T. Rex catalog, reimagined by a host of artists from Nick Cave and Lucinda Williams to Beth Orton, Nena and U2 with Elton John.

Some, like Joan Jet's version of "Jeepster," (the other T. Rex song you may have heard) are make-no-mistake takes on the original. But most are highly, and effectively, redone in surprising, revelatory fashion.

I'd highly recommend that T. Rex fans give "Angelheaded Hipster" a stream or two. But, for those who only know "Get It On" — the "Bang A Gong" was added to the song title in the U.S. to avoid confusion with another hit — I'd say take a listen to "Electric Warrior" and see if you're not hooked 15 seconds into "Mambo Sun" and, if you get the chance, check out the T. Rex portion of the Hall of Fame show.



Or just go ahead and watch the whole thing. It's well worth a couple of hours, especially if you're a fan of any of the inductees, who, the program shows, all deserve to be enshrined in Cleveland's Rock Hall.

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