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Devo: Live 1980

reviewed by *Si Wooldridge*

Tracklisting:

- Whip It
- Snowball
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- Secret Agent Man
- [Pink Pussycat](#)
- Blockhead
- (I Can't Get No) Satisfaction
- Uncontrollable Urge
- Mongoloid
- Be Stiff
- Gates of Steel
- Freedom of Choice
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- Gut Feeling/Slap Your Mammy
- Come Back Jonee
- Tunnel of Life
- Devo Corporate Anthem

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Are We Not Men? We Are Devo...

A predictable way to open a review on Akron, Ohio's finest export to date, so lets just get that out of the way first. Devo are probably best known to those slightly familiar with the band for the MTV staple, Whip It. A glorious new wave cult classic, it proved to be their breakthrough for their rather short-lived career in the spotlight. Despite this, the band proved to be one of the most influential new wave bands, hailed at their peak by the likes of Bowie and name checked much later by [Kurt Cobain](#) amongst others.

Devo stood for De-Evolution, and the band adopted a fairly bizarre appearance of cheap colourful jumpsuits, flowerpots on their heads, and a quirky synchronised movements during performances. This concert was filmed at the Phoenix Theater in Petaluma, California in 1980.

The concert kicks off with a new introduction that attempts to explain what Devo where about and the context of this concert in a Star Wars-style narration, and then explodes into action with an electrically charged version of Whip It. The band then run tightly through a long set list that includes their jerky but brilliant version of the Stones' (I Can't Get No) Satisfaction, the Stiff Records anthem Be Stiff (every band on the label recorded a version of this song) and guitar anthem Mongoloid. The concert finishes with a back projection [video](#) that sets the scene for a short song called Tunnel of Life before the farewell message of the loud and jarring Devo Corporate Anthem.

Video/Visuals

Presented in a 4:3 aspect ratio, footage is variable in quality, but understandable when you consider the age. Most of it is in very good condition but you do see the occasional artefact on screen. Close-ups of the stage are quite sharp, but the long shots have a soft focus look to them which degenerates a little dependant on the lighting rigs behind the band. Still this release is not so much about pristine visuals, more about the band and sound.

Audio/Soundtrack

Sound for the main feature is a very loud Dolby Digital 5.1 Surround. Some of the sound is out of sync with the performance, but that is forgivable due to the historical value of this release.

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