

SPONSOR **Nickel Creek** Why Should the Fire Die? august 9

SPONSOR **LADELL MCLIN**



DEVO

Devo - Live 1980 [DVD]

(Music Video Distributors)

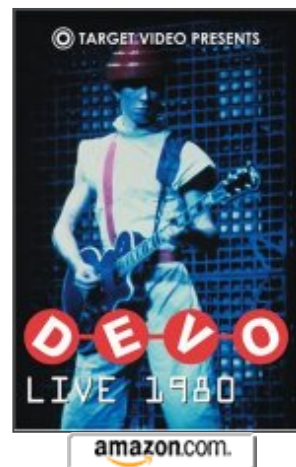
Rating: 6

US release date: 23 August 2005

UK release date: Available as import

by Adam Besenyodi

- :: e-mail this article
- :: print this article
- :: comment on this article



The newest entry into the Devo catalog starts with an opening crawl attempting to contextualize the concert which follows. Proclaiming "de-evolution is real", the spudboys contrast the political climate of the day, when "a former actor in motion picture entertainment" ruled the land with his "oil-rich federation and fundamentalist Christian supporters". The crawl continues: "On this night in 1980 Devo had no idea that history would prove their cautionary vision to be so frighteningly correct. Now, 25 years later, the reign of President Reagan seems in retrospect like a ray of sunshine compared to the present day rule of Emperor 'W' and his fellow fundamentalist enemies around the world."

And this is just the kind of subversive approach you expect from a band born out of the industrial wasteland of the late '70s Rust Belt. Presenting the August 17, 1980 show from the Phoenix Theater in Petaluma, California on the *Freedom of Choice* tour, Music Video Distributors and Devo, Inc. have put together a package that not only captures Devo at their apex, but also serves as a snapshot of a moment in time.

Only the DVD portion of this Dual Disc release was accessible for review

TODAY'S MUSIC

CD REVIEWS

[Tuesday, 30.Aug.05]

- :: **Armand van Helden**: *Nympho*
- :: **Darkane**: *Layers of Lies*
- :: **Terry Allen**: *The Silent Majority (Terry Allen's Greatest Missed Hits)*
- :: **Alanis Morissette**: *Jagged Little Pill Acoustic*
- :: **Superpitcher**: *Today*
- :: **Rufio**: *The Comfort of Home*
- :: **The Clayton-Hamilton Jazz Orchestra**: *Live at MCG*

CONCERT REVIEWS

[Monday, 29.Aug.05]

Brian Wilson

13.Aug.05: Wantagh, NY

If there was poetic justice, this show would have been filled. Hell, this is THE BEACH, yet the amphitheatre was only 1/3 full. It's a blasted shame...



and, based on what was available, this is not a disc you purchase to show off your home theater. The video quality ranges from passable to unwatchable, but it's forgivable based on the source material, age, and historical significance of the show. The audio fares better, lending a gritty overlay to the music. The simplicity of the industrial stage set up serves as a means to showcase the music -- banks of lights from behind are the only distraction. Initially clad in their red energy domes and white jumpsuits, looking like refugees from a nuclear test site, the band rips through a 19-song main set that draws evenly from all three of their proper releases up to this point.

Although "Whip It" wasn't released as a single until two months after the Petaluma show, the band had played it on their May 1980 appearance on ABC's *Fridays*, so the crowd is familiar with it. The opening crawl of *Devo - Live 1980* is shown over the "Freedom of Choice Theme Song" (curiously uncredited by Music Video Distributors), which blends immediately into "Whip It", but despite the energy on stage and in the crowd, Devo seems to play the latter as if they are almost bored with it -- as if they already know this song will one day be both their biggest hit and critical albatross. The band overcomes this unintentional misstep with energized run-throughs of the likes of "Snowball" and "It's Not Right" and the deep album-cut "Swelling Itching Brain". It's here in particular that Mark Mothersbaugh's agitated geek rock moves begin to tear away at his protective suit, leaving him, and the audience, in tatters -- but begging for more -- by song's end.

As expected, "(I Can't Get No) Satisfaction" shines live. With Mothersbaugh on guitar for this one, his anxious, twitchy delivery is ratcheted up a notch from the already near-perfect studio version found on *Q: Are We Not Men? A: We Are Devo!* and you're never really sure if this agitated, manic front man is going to reach fulfillment. By the time the band don their red tunics mid way through "Jocko Homo" (Jerry Casale in "D", Bob 2 in "E", Bob 1 in "V", Mothersbaugh in "O", and Alan Myers behind the drum kit), they prove to any holdouts in the crowd just what de-evolution is about with a preaching-to-the-converted edition of the song. Mothersbaugh works the crowd and the stage mercilessly through the call and response riddle of "O-hi-O" and "Are we not men?" The last song of the proper set, "Come Back Jonee", is a completely different beast live, similar to the way "Cross-Eyed and Painless" is transformed at the end of fellow CBGB's alum Talking Heads' landmark concert movie, *Stop Making Sense*, four years later. Both the band and audience are at a frenzied peak.

The "encore" consists of film excerpts of General Boy accidentally beheading Booji Boy, who we next see in a chair with a doctor unwrapping the bandages on his new head. The movie screen rises and the newly reconstituted Booji Boy is live on-stage singing "Tunnel of Life", and the show closes with the "Devo Corporate Anthem".

According to the press release accompanying the advance copy, the proper

RECENT MUSIC

CD REVIEWS

Annie
Arch Enemy
Armando
Atlantiquity
Autechre
Billy Bang
Frank Black
The Black Dahlia
Murder
Black Halos
Art Blakey
Broken Spindles
Stephen Bruton
Andy Caldwell
Johnny Cash
June Carter Cash
Cassidy
Coldplay
Common
Alice Cooper
The Coral
Criteria
Rodney Crowell
Cursive
Ernest Dawkins'
Chicago 12
Decahedron
Def Leppard
Jack DeJohnette
The Doleful Lions
Dressy Bessy
Kate Earl
Missy Elliott
Embrace
Felt
The Fleshtones
Fruit Bats
Eliza Gilkyson
Vivian Green
Peter Grummich
A Gun Called Tension
The High Dials
Hiltmeyer, Inc.
Hockey Night
Holopaw
I Am Kloot

The New

Pornographers
Me'Shell Ndegeocello
Nickel Creek
Salim Nourallah
Ox
Poi Dog Pondering
T. Raumschmiere
The Real Tuesday Weld
Xavier Rudd
Shantel
Woody Shaw
Slough Feg
Some Water and Sun
Son Volt
Son Volt - Retrospective
Sons and Daughters
String Cheese Incident
Marty Stuart
Sufjan Stevens
Superchumbo
Tierney Sutton
John Vanderslice
Waco Brothers
The Warlocks
Abigail Washburn
Kanye West #1
Kanye West #2
The White Stripes
The Willowz
Windsor for the Derby
X-Ray Spex
Xiu Xiu
The Ying Yang Twins

CONCERT REVIEWS

2005 US Air Guitar
Championships
Paul Anka
Beck
Brendan Benson +
Robbers on High Street
Billy Corgan
Castanets
Dressy Bessy + The
Jessica Fletchers
Edgefest 10 Featuring:

Dual Disc edition will contain two 5.1 audio mixes to choose from: a Bob Casale Mix and a Big Round Sound mix. DVD bonus concert footage of "Praying Hands" and "Shrivel Up" by Devo's alter-egos, Dove -- The Band of Love, from the M80 Concert in 1980 is also scheduled for inclusion. The audio-only side is slated to incorporate just the Bob Casale Mix. In spite of the video quality, *Devo - Live 1980* is a worthwhile addition to any spudboy's collection for the remarkable fact that a record of the show even exists.

"We must repeat 'D-E-V-O.'"

— 1 August 2005

I Self Divine
Idlewild
J-Live
Ahmad Jamal
Leela James
The Jessica Fletchers
The Jim Yoshii Pile-Up
The Juan MacLean
R. Kelly
Kinski
Felix Laband
Daniel Lanois
Damian Lazarus
Keith LeBlanc
Jamie Lidell
Little Brother
The Magic Numbers
Malcolm Middleton
The Mobius Band
Moonbabies
Allison Moorer
Moping Swans / Circus
Devils
The Most Serene
Republic
Motion Pictures
Bob Mould
Willie Nelson
Nevermore
Billy Idol, Our Lady
Peace, 30 Second to
Mars + Static-X
Gravy Train!!!!
Alicia Keys
Lollapalooza 2005
Meat Beat Manifesto
Mission of Burma
Oasis
Queens of the Stone
Age + Interpol + Bloc
Party
Rainer Maria + Denison
Witmer
Siren Music Festival
2005
Son Volt
Sounds of the
Underground Tour
Bruce Springsteen + The
Go Team + The Deadly
Snakes
Sufjan Stevens
Teenage Fanclub
They Might Be Giants
Richard Thompson
Emiliana Torrini
The White Stripes +
The Killers + Louis XIV
+ Garbage + Social
Distortion

[advertising](#) | [about](#) | [contributors](#) | [submissions](#) | [PopShop](#)
Hosted by OCS Solutions

© 1999-2005 PopMatters.com. All rights reserved.

PopMatters.com™ and PopMatters™ are trademarks of PopMatters Media, Inc. and PopMatters Magazine.