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FEATURES

- Second side of disc contains an audio CD

Devo: Live 1980

By Shoegaze99

Disc Details:

Video:	N/A
Anamorphic:	N/A
Audio:	• N/A
Subtitles:	N/A
Runtime:	N/A
Rating:	N/R
Release Date:	August 30, 2005
Production Year:	2005
Director:	N/A
Released by :	Music Video Dist.
Region:	1 NTSC

RATING



QUOTES

"Devo was truly a great band, not simply because of the music, but because of the *performance* that music came wrapped up in."

"Whip-I t. Snowball. Planet Earth. Satisfaction. Jocko Homo. Devo Corporate Anthem. It just doesn't get much better than this."

Are they not men?

No, they are Devo.

Devo stand at a strange place in the world of music. Honest experimental musicians, the public sees them as quirky one-hit wonders. A band that tried to push how music is presented into new territory, the public saw them as guys with goofy hats. Genuine talents, the public saw them as goofy.

But their fans know that Devo was truly a great band, not simply because of the music, but because of the *performance* that music came wrapped up in. Devo carried on the tradition of those before them like David Bowie, who put as much emphasis on their

presentation as they did their music. When one considers their manifesto about de-evolution (where we are transgressing back to lower life forms such as snails), Devo is perhaps the most thorough in regard to their presentation.



And so we have *Devo: Live 1980*, a self-explanatory title for a not-very-self-explanatory band. Capturing their August 17, 1980 performance at the Phoenix Theater, Petaluma, this dual-disc DVD (see below) captures a moment in time, showcasing the band just as they began their rise to a brief domination of MTV's airwaves. This show represents Devo on their

Freedom of Choice tour, right before *Whip-It* became an international smash. The show itself is infamous, having been talked up for years – talked about because it was a rare Devo show to be professionally filmed – but has never been available until now.

Devo fans have been waiting for this for 25 years.

Whip-It. Snowball. Planet Earth. Satisfaction. Jocko Homo. Devo Corporate Anthem. It just doesn't get much better than this. Better still, their set includes more than the band's best known hits. **Devo: Live 1980** boasts footage of more obscure Devo classics like *Swelling Itching Brain* and *Pink Pussycat*.

"With the exception of a grainy, barely watchable camera set at the rear of the Phoenix Theater, the footage here is quite good, capturing the unusual, frantic energy of Devo at their peak."



The de-evolution is in full force from the start, with the Star Wars-style opening crawl referencing the move from the Reagan era to the “W” era., proving that even in death, Devo’s mandate remains in focus. From that point forward, the focus is on the band and their remarkable show. No footage wasted lingering on the audience. It’s all about those men – robots? – called

Devo doing what they did better than anyone else. This isn’t just music, it’s *theater*.

In showcasing a band that was always at their best on stage, where their eclectic style and sensibility and energy really came through, this is truly a treasure from the Devo archives.

Presentation

Now here’s a swell surprise. This DVD actually looks pretty good. Culled from footage taken in 1980, less than two years after laserdisc first went on sale and long before DVD was a consideration, one would expect this show to look shoddy and unprofessional. Not so. With the exception of a grainy, barely watchable camera set at the rear of the Phoenix Theater, the footage here is quite good, capturing the unusual, frantic energy of Devo at their peak.

The sound, too, is a surprise. This show is 25 years old ... and it sounds really good! This isn’t a thumping stereo-killer like the recent Led Zeppelin two-disc set, and there are some occasional patches of distorted sound, but Devo fans will be delighted at what is a generally strong sound presentation.

Extras

ASo, this is a dual-disc ... which means, apparently, that it's a two-sided disc, not a two-disc release. The flip side is a CD, and damnit, it's a pretty good CD at that. The disc presents "Dove" – Devo disguised as a tacky lounge band – live at the M-80 Festival. It's a great show and, for the ardent Devo fan, as good an extra as we could have asked for.



The Bottom Line

Make no bones about it, if you ever loved Devo, you need to have **Devo: Live 1980**. If you ever *thought* about loving Devo, you need to have **Devo: Live 1980**. Hell, if you have ever known somebody who has thought about meeting somebody who was friends with somebody who loved the guy who drove Devo's tour bus, you need to have **Devo: Live 1980**. If there is a Holy Grail of Devo fandom, this is close to it – and now it's in our hands.



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