



















The Specials - 30th Anniversary Tour

Cast - The Specials

Director - N/A

Country of Origin - UK

Discs - 1

Distributor - Music Video Distributor

Reviewer - Scott MacDonald

MSRP - \$16.95

The Film (5/5)

For many people (myself very much included) when they think of ska they think of the Specials. They have existed long enough that they are essentially the godfathers of the modern ska movement. They were founded in 1977 by keyboardist Jerry Dammers, and combined the sounds of old school ska music, reggae, new wave, and punk rock to create a new ska sound that can still be heard in bands as far down the line as the Planet Smashers, the Toasters, Rancid, and so on.

This DVD slightly inappropriately named 30th Anniversary Tour actually celebrates 30 years since their landmark self-titled debut album, as it has been 32 years since they have burst upon the scene. Since their initial founding The Specials have broken up, and reunited several times with a variety of members, and varying degrees of success. The lineup on this DVD is notable for being the most complete lineup of the original Specials seen since the early 80's. The only member excluded is founding member Jerry Dammers. However, even without him this show plain out rocks.

When I got this DVD in the mail I did not know exactly what to expect. The recent Sex Pistols reunion with Johnny Rotten's horrible sounding renditions of once great punk anthems made me wonder if the Specials could pull it off. My initial fears were dispelled within moments of popping the DVD in my player, and cranking up the opening track Do the Dog. This lineup has not been fully assembled in almost 25 years, and they sound like they've been playing together the entire time. The band was totally in sync, and everything from the music to the vocals was top notch. The concert runs 84 minutes according to the packaging, and feels like half that. The Specials play all their greatest hits, and then some with a feverish intensity that bands half their age couldn't muster. This DVD is simply amazing, and is a

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must buy for Ska and Specials fans.

I have included the set list below.

- 1. "Do The Dog"
- 2. "(Dawning Of A) New Era"
- 3. "Gangsters"
- 4. "It's Up To You"
- 5. "Monkey Man"
- 6. "Rat Race"
 7. "Hey, Little Rich Girl"
- 8. "Blank Expression"
- 9. "Doesn't Make It Alright"
- 10. "Stupid Marriage"
- 11. "Concrete Jungle"
- 12. "Friday Night Saturday Morning"
- 13. "Stereotype"
- 14. "Man At C&A"
- 15. "A Message To You Rudy"
- 16. "Do Nothing"
- 17. "Little Bitch"
- 18. "Nite Klub"
- 19. "Too Much Too Young"
- 20. "Longshot"/"Liquidator"/"Moonstomp"
- 21. "Enjoy Yourself"
- 22. "Ghost Town"
- 23. "Guns Of Navarone"
- 24. "You're Wondering Now"

Audio/Video (5/5)

MVD/Blink has presented the Specials 30th Anniversary Tour DVD in its original 1:33:1 aspect ratio. The transfer is crisp, and clear throughout. No noticeable grain can be seen, and the level of clarity and detail on this DVD is amazing. MVD would do well to issue this show on Blu-ray.

The audio is presented in a fantastic 5.1 Surround Sound soundtrack. The music practically explodes from your TV, once again no real grain or background noise (except the occasional bit of crowd noise) is audible, and the audio is just as good as the transfer that accompanies it.

Extras (2/5)

The only notable extra on this set is 20 minute documentary interviewing the Specials regarding their 30th anniversary.

Overall

The only thing better than buying this DVD and watching it in the comfort of your own home would be to have been there in person. Since the Specials currently have no plans to tour beyond the few 30th Anniversary dates from 2009, I would say it you are a Specials or a Ska fan than this is the only way to go. The DVD looks and sounds amazing and the band are in top form. The set list is a perfect mix of greatest hits, and a few more obscure tracks that should please long time fans such as myself. This DVD comes highly recommended.

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