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"A sinister cabal of superior writers."

Music DVD Review: Emerson, Lake and Palmer - 40th Anniversary Reunion Concert

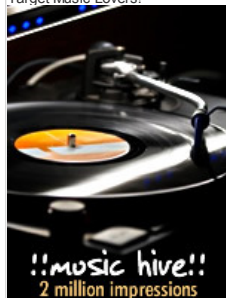
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Author: Greg Barbrick — Published: Sep 08, 2011 at 12:40 am

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The night was perfect for the 40th anniversary concert of Emerson, Lake and Palmer. Playing before a huge crowd at the High Voltage Festival, ELP took the stage just as the sun was beginning to set. For the next 90 minutes or so the gods of prog graced us with their presence, and those halcyon days of the seventies were back.

ELP opened with the classic "Karn Evil 9: First Impression Part 2" from *Brain Salad Surgery*. When Greg Lake belted out those famous words; "Welcome back my friends to the show that never ends," the crowd was ecstatic. His vocals were spot-on, as they were throughout the concert. He was especially strong during two of his signature songs, "From The Beginning" and "Lucky Man."

"Lucky Man" is famous for Keith Emerson's monumental soundscapes in its closing segment. Since it is just not possible to recreate those tones on modern equipment, Emerson brought the old gear with him. Watching him play his ancient Moog beast, with its old dials and hundreds of patch cords everywhere, looked cool as hell.

The other instrumental powerhouse in the band is drummer Carl Palmer. While his kit may not be quite as over the top as that of Neil Peart, it comes close. Palmer was all over the skins, often a blur of motion, and the physical workout looked pretty intense. At one point during his solo, he very theatrically took off his shirt, revealing his pudgy chest for all and sundry.

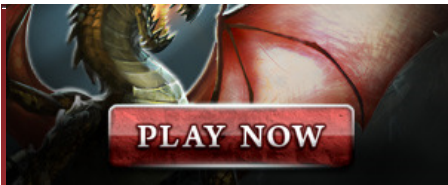
Towards the end of the show, Keith Emerson offered up his trademark destruction of the organ bit. He went all out too, beating the crap out of it, and then sticking knives in. Eventually he tipped the organ over, where it lay on the stage, howling in pain.

For me, the slowest portion of the evening was "Pictures At An Exhibition." At 20 minutes in length it was a bit much, although the strobes and onstage explosions at the end were still pretty great.

MVD Visual has just released *Emerson Lake and Palmer: The 40th Anniversary Reunion Concert* on DVD and Blu Ray. The set features the full concert from July 25, 2010, plus some bonus materials. The most impressive of the extras are three new interviews conducted with Keith Emerson, Greg Lake, and Carl Palmer.

After all the trials and tribulations Emerson, Lake and Palmer have been through over the years, it is gratifying to see them together again. They still put on one hell of a show too.

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