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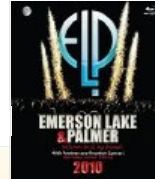
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"A sinister cabal of superior writers."

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

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Author: Glen Boyd — Published: Sep 09, 2011 at 1:58 am

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Emerson Lake and Palmer is a band that has been — unjustifiably in my own opinion — universally shat upon by rock critics over the years. Personally, I have never quite understood the hostility.

Back in their brief, early seventies heyday, ELP provided the blueprint for the progressive rock power trio format later employed to varying degrees of success by bands ranging from imitators like Triumvirat (not so much), to those who really took the ball and ran with it (Rush and the latter day Phil Collins led version of Genesis).

What most people don't remember though, is that back in the early to mid-seventies, ELP ruled. With a string of mostly great — though occasionally indulgent — albums like *Tarkus*, *Trilogy* and especially their masterpiece *Brain Salad Surgery*, ELP held the undisputed title of the greatest "musician's band" on the planet.

As most of their most diehard fans



already know, the party was pretty much over when ELP released the *Works Volume 1* set (three sides of solo albums, plus a fourth side of group tracks), followed by the mostly outtakes *Works Volume 2* set. Much ego-wrangling followed, culminating in the particularly wretched *Love Beach* album, and their eventual breakup.

But back when ELP inspired the same sort of debate amongst keyboard enthusiasts between Emerson and Rick Wakeman of Yes, as Beck Vs. Page did amongst guitarists, these guys were the real deal. As for Carl Palmer, and with all due respect to Rush's Neil Peart and Porcupine Tree's Gavin Harrison, no one outside of perhaps Keith Moon has better defined the term "monster drummer" before or since.

That said, ELP's *40th Anniversary Reunion Concert* DVD is mostly a nostalgia trip. It also has a few very noticeable flaws sound wise in the early going, particularly during "The Barbarian." Here, the band don't seem to be playing as a tight unit (although they do eventually find their place on the later tracks). Emerson's mike also noticeably cuts out.

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