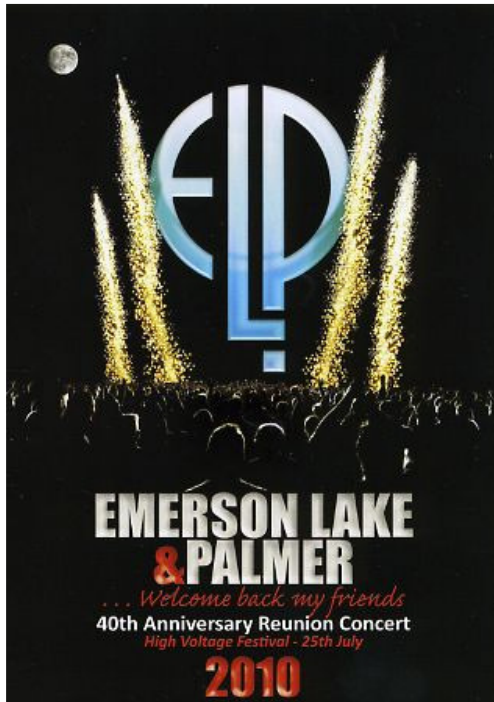


FAME Review: Emerson, Lake, & Palmer - 40th Anniversary Reunion (DVD)

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40th Anniversary Reunion

[Emerson, Lake, & Palmer](#)

MVD Visual - MVD5219D (DVD)

Available from [ELP's web store](#).

A review written for the Folk & Acoustic Music Exchange
by **Mark S. Tucker**
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While I was ecstatically getting my brain razed by some of the latest NuProgressives (Chocolate Horses and Nerves Junior being two of the most recent and among the best), this MVD DVD providentially came my way as kind of a subtle grail, a piece of the true cross, a time machine back to where it all started. Emerson, Lake, and Palmer have reigned as co-equal kings among a coterie of legendary ensembles from an age when unbelievable intelligence, talent, and musical mastery held sway, a time that sadly waned as the shenanigans of punk took over (a regicide happily and speedily failed, as we've seen), and is now in the last gasps of its glory. Before Jordan Rudess, Vitali Kuprij, and others arose, Keith Emerson, Jon Lord, Kerry Minear, Mike Pinder, and sundry geniuses established what virtuosity meant in a rock keyboardist. Before Mike Portnoy, Neil Peart, and other skins-pounders took over the reins, Carl Palmer, Bill Bruford, Ginger Baker, Keith Moon, and others were the drummers to be feared and admired. And when it came to the bass guitar, Greg Lake, Colin Hodgkinson, and Percy Jones preceded Flea and the gaggle of modern day four-stringers. There are always antecedents.

Earlier, Emerson fulfilled a dream we progheads have long held: the reunion of his pre-ELP band, The Nice, and, man, was it ever a rare thrill to see Keith, Brian Davison, and Lee Jackson making music again (if you're a Nice fan, check out the hideously cool Microwerks *Diamond Hard Blue Apples of the Moon* 2-CD issuance of 'bootleg' materials from the original 60s Nice). Then last year came Shout's 4-CD 'bootleg' ELP set, *A Time and a Place*, and now we have MVD's *40th Anniversary Reunion*. It's enough to give a music fiend a heart attack! That said, this 2010 performance is, for all intents and purposes, the band's farewell.

Besides the fact that there has been, as is commented upon by Chris Welch in the bonus section, "much water passed under the bridge", not all of it was clean and, besides, the boys are now in their elder years. It shows, especially in music this technical. One needs no more an analogue of this than checking that Nice reunion against the *Diamond Hard* performances, the latter possessed of hunger and zeal, the former mainly of reminiscence. That's what *40th Anniversary* is as well. I never pass up a chance to lay hold of ELP material, especially the pre-*Love Beach* prime stuff, and this is jam-packed with the old days. Nonetheless, it's 40 years later, and everything about this vid tells me it's the last hurrah.

There's a rather striking contrast present, however. While Emerson's a bit slower, and Lake's starting to lose the top level of his voice, Palmer is amazing, as on top of his game as ever, unbelievably precise, as inventive as though it were still the 70s. He's put on a bit of weight (Greg's put on a lot, seeming a brother to the young Leslie West) but is still quite fit and plays like he's yet in his 20s. Remarkable. Emerson still loves those old Moogs, and just the look of them, with a wilderness of patch cords hanging off the panels, is impressive. He also engages in a bit of the old knife-the-organ antic, not like the Nice's old *America* days and early ELP, more a crowd pleaser now than the hot-blooded young rebel, and Lake reminds us that he really could craft some lovely songs, but youth is not forever, things change, and even the mighty must one day turn aside and rest. That's what this DVD is, a testament to the home stretch of the great, a last long hello to old pals...but if you think it's solemn or mellow, think again. By the time the show starts closing down by way of *Pictures at an Exhibition*, you'll know you've been through your paces, the band's been through theirs, and all is still right with the world.

Track List:

- Karn-Evil 9: 1st Impression - Pt.2
- The Barbarian
- Bitches Crystal
- Knife-Edge
- From the Beginning
- Touch and Go
- Take a Pebble / Piano Solo / Tarkus
- Farewell to Arms
- Lucky Man
- Pictures at an Exhibition
- Fanfare for the CommonMan / Drum Solo / Rondo

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[Editors Note: This review was posted originally on September 26, 2011. On the September 29, 2011, edition of *Planet Rock* Radio, Carl Palmer announced, "From my point of view I thought that this particular show was a great way to end a great career. I thought that the 40th anniversary was really the right way for us to leave." We will certainly miss you ELP. See <http://www.seeofsound.com/editorial.php?id=222>]

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