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- FEATURES
- CD REVIEWS
- ▶ [Indie/Alternative](#)
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- ▶ [Punk/Power Pop](#)
- ▶ [Metal/Hardcore](#)
- ▶ [Electro/Industrial](#)
- ▶ [Compilations](#)
- DVD REVIEWS
- BOOK/'ZINE REVIEWS
- GAME REVIEWS
- WEBSITE REVIEWS
- PRODUCT REVIEWS
- COMICS
- CD PREVIEWS
- UPCOMING RELEASES

Anathema

A Moment in Time (MVD)
by **Mike Delano**

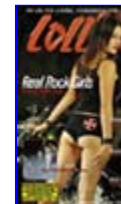
If you've been jonesin' for some prog metal, the new concert DVD from **Anathema** should do the trick. They're a little bit like Dream Theater fronted by Gavin Rossdale, with all of the pros and cons one would imagine given that set-up. Like Dream Theater, their sound is big, grand, all-encompassing: The onstage string section has a constant presence, and the band's willingness to incorporate a variety of instruments means keyboards, acoustic guitars, and pianos all converge to give each song the feel of a mini-epic. Unlike Dream Theater, Anathema doesn't have the need for endless solo jerk-off sessions (thank god), which lets the songs shine instead of the players. Unfortunately, they rarely write songs as memorable as Dream Theater's.

Frontman Vincent Cavanagh's vocals provide an interesting contrast to the sweeping scope of the music. Instead of going toe-to-toe with the highs and lows of the songs, he mostly just sings in the steady mid-range, which isn't particularly memorable, but it feels genuine, and it keeps the arrangements from sounding overblown. His extended use of a vocoder is jarringly out of place, although when the band calms its attack to sync up with his hushed, distorted vocals, it reveals an amazing, trance-like groove that they don't explore nearly enough.

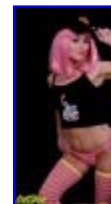
The DVD doesn't offer much in the way of extras outside of the main 14-song concert, a 2006 performance in Poland. A mildly interesting interview doesn't yield any great secrets, but a four-song 2004 set in Krakow is a good showcase of their more aggressive material. Both performances look and sound as crisp as you would hope, so it's a worth seeking out for both fans and the curious. (www.musicvideodistributors.com)



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