



Moogfest 2006

Rating: 6.5/10

Moogs, the analog keyboards with the funny name designed by a doctor with a funny name and manufactured by the Moog Music corporation, are the gold standard of keyboards. The name Moog has come to serve as the "xerox" or "kleenex" of the analog synthesizer, and the instrument is a common reference point for any electronic musician with any sense of history or genre insight. Moog players are plentiful, and so it is only the *crème de la crème* of keyboard devotees that are able to participate in the annual Moogfest, a number of live performances held each year in New York to showcase the widespread effect of instrument inventor Bob Moog's legacy.

The Moogfest 2006 DVD, a collection of concert footage from the 2006 event, is of ample length at over two hours and contains some of the heaviest hitting, well-known Moog instrumentalists of the day. Jordan Rudess, although renowned as an excellent keyboard player, comes out with two clichéd improvisational compositions, one a spacey demonic jam and the other a cheesy rock song for him to endlessly solo over.

Bernie Worrell teams up with a drummer and bass player in a performance with surprise guest DJ Logic, who is Worrell's cousin. Although Worrell's musical resume is dotted with a little bit of everything - he has held it down with Parliament Funkadelic, Talking Heads, and even Primus along the way - what he brought to New York last year was an excessive and under-whelming jam session that might be a family legend in the making but on the whole is just kinda boring.

Roger O'Donnell, former keyboardist for The Psychedelic Furs, The Cure, and The Thompson Twins, provides one of Moogfest 2006's highlights with his exploration of live sampling and use of multiple Moogs with "This Is A Story," a track from his newest solo release, *The Truth In Me*. O'Donnell's performance in the film follows an interesting interview that reveals how enamored he is with the Moog company and how the brand and the instrument figure into his creative output.

Both Adam Holzman and Jan Hammer (the latter of which is as close to a Lord as one gets in the world of keyboards) simultaneously use their Moogs and mini-Moogs as lead voices and collective parts of a prog puzzle. The two finger their way to impressive results, each pulling out distinctively different sound textures and technical chops during

lengthy improvisational pieces. To boot, the duo's backing band is rock solid, providing the final piece for a tight set that is supposedly a rare showing for Hammer.

If Hammer is Lord of the keyboard, then Keith Emerson is a deity in his own right for the rock keyboard world; to be honest, his wirey setup alone is an impressive work of art. Known best for being a member of global superstars Emerson Lake & Palmer, Keith Emerson showcases his never-ending skill set over a 30 minute performance. Emerson's style is characteristically proggy and based in classic rock and, although the rest of the band is often equally in the spotlight, his Moogfest set is vintage stuff (even "Lucky Man").

One of the only places where Moogfest 2006 falls short is with the artist interviews, done prior to the live performances, which don't always match up. On a couple of occasions one artist's interview is followed by a performance from someone completely different, which can lead to some confusion. The DVD's menu setup is another issue, as the individual songs within a live set aren't broken into chapters or any other obvious stopping points. If those 15-minute jams run too long, either get comfortable holding down the fast forward button or miss out on the latter end of a set.