

# *The New Director's Cut (DVD)*

Yes

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<http://www.yesworld.com>

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Another Yes DVD? Really?

Indeed. This time around, in typically convoluted fashion, the iconic prog-rock band gets the full-length concert DVD treatment courtesy of the same production team that brought you the Yes documentary DVD *Yesspeak* a couple of years back. That release interspersed extensive interviews with all five "Classic Yes" principals – Jon Anderson, Steve Howe, Chris Squire, Rick Wakeman and Alan White – with concert footage from the Birmingham, England stop on the group's 2003 35th Anniversary tour. The emphasis on *Yesspeak*, however, was on the interviews, with the performance footage restricted to brief snippets and interludes.

*The New Director's Cut* reverses the roles of the two components of *Yesspeak* and presents the entire live set from Yes' July 3, 2003 set at Birmingham N.I.A., with brief clips from the interviews spliced in as occasional color commentary. Potential buyers should note that the setlist here is identical to that of last fall's [Live At Montreux 2003](#) DVD, as the band did not vary its setlist night to night on their 2003 European tour (they even wear the same outfits in both...). The sound mixing and video editing are perhaps a little better on this DVD than on



*Montreux*, but there's not a tremendous difference in quality in either direction.

What you're left with, then, is the quality of the performances themselves, which are – as usual – quite good. The latter-day version of "Siberian Khatru" might lack the youthful drive of the original in its opening minutes, but the fire the band displays in the lengthy closing jam is undeniable. Classic cuts like "And You And I," "Heart Of The Sunrise" and "I've Seen All Good People" receive similarly enthusiastic treatment, interspersed with newer (and lesser) works like "Magnification" and "In The Presence Of."

The two highlights for this viewer are "South Side Of The Sky," a complex album cut from *Fragile* that was rescued from obscurity by the band around 2000 and given a dynamite reading, and "Awaken." The latter is in fact the one lengthy opus the band performed on this particular tour, and their reading of it here is right on the mark, which is to say nearly transcendent. That said, I'd have preferred hearing/seeing "Close To The Edge" performed to sitting through the solo selections allotted for each member.

The second DVD in this package, after finishing up the tail end of the Birmingham show, adds an all-new feature by including the band's entire set from their June 29, 2003 performance at the Glastonbury Festival.

The latter sounds like it might be a great addition – after all, you know it'll be a big crowd and the set was truncated to exclude all those superfluous solos. However, Yes' set at Glastonbury occurred in daylight, a challenge for any band, but perhaps especially one like Yes, where lights and visuals have always played a role in setting the mood and the music isn't the sort of thing that gets your average festival-goer up and dancing. That said, the crowd is indeed large and mostly into it, though the camera angles are more restricted, leaving Howe and Wakeman with the short end of the stick in terms of camera time.

*The New Director's Cut* doesn't really offer a whole lot that's new and different for the Yes fan, but it's at least nice to have the *Yesspeak* concert footage available in this more music-centric form. With [the uncertainty surrounding the band's future](#) at the moment, it's also good to have the Classic Yes lineup well-documented in its still-considerable latter-day glory.

**Rating: [B+](#)**

User Rating: Not Yet Rated

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