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Jon Anderson - Tour of the Universe

Score: **35%**
Rating: **Not Rated**
Publisher: **MVD Entertainment Group**
Region: **1**
Media: **DVD/1**
Running Time: **156 Mins.**
Genre: **Musical/Live Performance/Documentary**
Audio: **Dolby Digital 5.1 Surround, DTS
5.1 Surround, Dolby Digital
Stereo**

Features:

The Golden Mean
Golden Music
Lyrics with Audio

Jon Anderson, for years the front man for the band Yes, recently released his first solo DVD. Entitled **Jon Anderson - Tour of the Universe**, the DVD features 21 songs performed by Jon. The songs span his career, from his days with Yes to collaborations with Vangelis, as well as some of his earlier solo works. Add to this several never-before released tracks and you have quite an overview of a long and fruitful career. Being a longtime fan of Yes, I was very excited about viewing this DVD. I love Jon's voice and his songwriting, so I poured myself a nice cup of coffee, stuck the DVD in the machine, turned the sound up and the lights down, and sat back for what I anticipated to be a wonderful journey of sight and sound. What I got was, well, somewhat unexpected.



There is no question that Mr. Anderson is "new age" in the truest sense of the word. This has long been evident in both his music and in his lifestyle. Knowing that he has long been a believer in the "Golden Mean," I expected some amount of pseudo-religious monologue to be found in this release, and in this regard I was disappointed. Much of the video is spent listening to Jon discuss this belief system to a small studio audience in attendance, and for the most part, it is inane and, at the very least, offers an insight into the motivations behind his music. Although I do not agree with his philosophies, I generally try to keep a tolerant mindset in respect to everyone's views, and by doing so, I was able to appreciate, if not necessarily enjoy, these segments. The Internet is here as the guide to help us move through the multiverse and enter the realm of whatever Jon... just sing me some nice songs please.

And sing he does. The 21 songs on the DVD are well done and I am happy to report that he has not stymied his vocal talents in the least. From haunting vocal numbers to modern versions of familiar tunes to collaborative melds and electronica, the music still speaks to me in so many ways. I could have very easily leaned back in my chair, closed my eyes, and enjoyed the music without pause. There is little question that if I were rating this DVD on its own merits, it would easily receive a score in the high 90's. Unfortunately, simply



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the songs is not an option. **Tour of the Universe** is filmed at, and obviously subside XM Radio, a fact all too apparent in the oft repeated advertisements that take place almost every song, and in a few cases, during songs (you can hear a DJ doing a bit during the instrumental portion of "Bring On The Day"). At one point, a subtitle appears on screen stating that the "extraterrestrials from XM Radio" are here to assist with technology as a gateway. Huh? Sadly, the chapter editing of the DVD makes it difficult to skip these segments without missing some of the songs, as the ads run into and around the musical portions. As if the advertisements were not enough, the editing is sloppy and disjointed as well. The times when Jon appears on screen are often digitized over with odd visual effects and CG graphics. While some of these are done in an MTV sort of way, many of them are disassociated with the music and only detract from the overall experience.

For those more interested in the philosophical and religious views, there are a couple of feature segments that discuss the "mysteries" behind the Golden Mean and how the Golden Mean has influenced several great classical composers. These special features actually run a few minutes longer than the feature video. In the end, although the music was absolutely beautiful, this DVD turned into a two-handed helping of XM Radio infomercial and theoretical musings regarding the Golden Mean. It was once said about Jon that he is the only person on this planet that is not from this planet, and after watching this, well, that may be true. Only the Internet and the ET's at XM Radio could guide me into getting my 3 hours of music.

-The Mung Bard, GameVortex Communications AKA Bur

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