



Posted: 03/18/05



One Of These Nights (2005)

by *Rory L. Aronsky*

Al DiMeola in concert from [Music Video Distributors](#).

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Music Video Distributors puts out an eclectic mix of instrumentals from a man with jazz in his soul, music in his heart, and talent in his head and hands.

In a semi-intimate venue in Germany, made even more intimate by the camerawork exhibited here that sidles up to jazz guitarist Al Di Meola as well as his fellow musicians, Meola's music is boundlessly enrapturing. He doesn't appear to play the music as much he lives it. It can be seen most often in close-ups where he really gets into his music, which is the most admirable sort of dedication there is.

During the first 50 minutes, his music seems to conjure up walking through a vast city at sunset, where you're very welcome to be there. It's such a wonderful place, dashing towards this part and that. But if you prefer to keep your imagination's feet planted firmly in your head, consider it a mixture of various genres. There's fire and immense passion in certain pieces, a cool detachment in others, and even further such as in "One Night Last June" where you might as well be floating towards the stars. Di Meola not only does it all with his trusty guitars, but has eight able musicians backing him up. In the most entertaining sequence of the concert, Di Meola squares off with Gumbi Ortiz on percussion, where Ortiz really keeps his hands going to keep up with good ol' Al. And Ortiz doesn't have any trouble at all. You almost expect his hands to fly off and start bouncing around everything else in the venue. There's a real energy between the two, a genuine entertainment and emotion to be felt there.

Fortunately, the crew who captured this concert were wise enough to keep 98% of the focus on Di Meola and his band of merry musicians, with 2% devoted to the audience as the concert begins and in between numbers. It's not like those high-powered, high-profile concert DVDs where the energy takes form in a huge stadium, and in order to feel it, you've got to be shown the audience's reaction every four seconds. Here, we are the audience. Sure the people we see are watching the concert, but it's our time too. And the time spent with Al Di Meola is made even better by the featurette that's included on the disc, which documents the preparations for the concert, the instruments being set up, the discussion among Di Meola and his musicians about the set list, and Al talking about his experiences of the concert, while everyone involved sits around him and says nothing. But watching all this take form, everything become organized just in time for the show to begin, makes it one of the most useful and entertaining featurettes I've ever seen on any DVD, Hollywood or otherwise. Because they are outside that industry, there's no bullcrap on what's said. Or at least it doesn't feel like it.

This is a concert DVD in which to become completely lost. It might take a few minutes, but you'll feel your mind travel, wonder, consider, and just love what Al Di Meola has to offer in his music. He really gets to the core of imagination with such feeling.

Rory L. Aronsky of Saugus, CA is an aspiring full-time film critic and also writes for Film Threat. Additionally, he is a student at College of the Canyons in Valencia.

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