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Al Di Meola

One Of These Nights DVD

Review by Josh Turner

Slated by many to be one of the greatest guitarists ever, he's definitely a hall-of-famer that tops countless peoples' lists. Just the other day, he was featured in a Flixster quiz, which means he's still relevant and going on his third decade. What this concert goes to prove is why he soars so high above the clouds. If the census bureau were to do a statistical analysis of positive receptions by first-time fans, this guy may be the king of the hill. The only negative factors drawing away from his approval rating is his reticent manner and unassuming name, and those are laudable qualities in the grand scheme. Ultimately, any lapse in recognition has less to do with his talent and everything to do with publicity. He's commonly liked by those who can recognize rare skill. So all advertisers need to do is pipe this music into prospective buyers' ears and they'll surely earn themselves a surfeit of committed customers.

Di Meola's meditative fingerings pensively rival the thought-inducing freestylings of Roine Stolt. Additionally, he demonstrates an alacrity that's fuzzier than Speedy Gonzales circumnavigating a stampede. However when he's swiftest, his wind sprints are done in the tidiest of patterns. Alone he is a force to reckon with; yet this event also showcases the talents of Gumbi Ortiz on percussion and Ernie Adams on drums. Plus, Mario Parmisano's tactile members volcanically dance on a piano and synths. Rounding out the score is András Sturcz on cello, Gyula Benkő on viola, and Gábor Csonka and Victor Uhzik on violins. That Hungarian fab four makes up the Sturcz String Quartet, who were already established for contributions to Ian Anderson's *Rupi's Dance* leading up to this engagement.

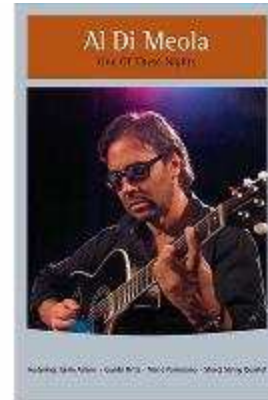
A Jersey native himself, Di Meola is presently touring at select clubs stateside. Because he's seldom out there to be seen, you might be waiting a very long time before he comes to a venue that's within a reasonable distance of your home. When he's not overseas, he's primarily on the U.S. coasts. If he does venture near, do yourself a favor and get tickets fast as he's been known to sell out quickly. Just the other day a friend of mine was forlornly turned away when attempting to see him in the flesh.

Anyhow, every note of every song on this disc is dexterously performed to an extremely appreciative crowd. Moreover, each of his gorgeous guitars gets airtime across many genres and techniques.

Aside from being an audience-pleaser, this skilled artist is earth-friendly too. The product's packaging consists mostly of paper pulp, and the plastic cross that holds the digital media is negligible when compared to a standard release. Apart from tangible matter enveloping precious goods, the bundled software is sparse too. The feature presentation barely exceeds an hour and forty minutes, but it's accompanied by a pair of worthwhile bonuses. Included is a biography about this legendary guitarist and a documentary that chronicles the production of this disc. Since both are short and the former is at your own pace, add another ten minutes at best. Nevertheless, those two facets and the inset in addition to a truly wondrous act provide wholesome satiety in the end.

Unless you're blessed with his presence, this extraordinary recording is a great introduction for those unfamiliar with his work.

Less than trivial, "One of these Nights occurs at the "Scala" cultural center in Ludwigsburg, which



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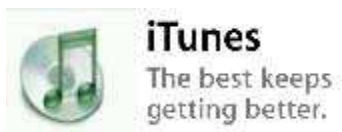
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