

March 23, 2012

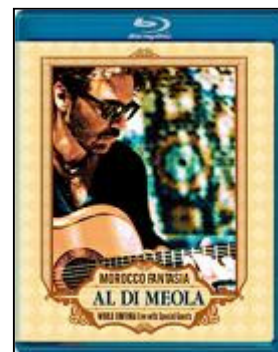
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DiMeola, Al: Morocco Fantasia (Blu-ray)

Here's a great example of a wonderful concert being somewhat ruined by a bad transfer to a video medium, and in this case Blu-ray. *Morocco Fantasia* features a 2009 show by legendary jazz-fusion guitarist Al DiMeola and his band World Sinfonia performing at the Mawazine Festival in Rabat, Morocco. The band features Al Di Meola (guitar), Peo Alfonsi (2nd guitar), Fausto Beccalossie (accordion), Gumbo Ortiz (percussion), Victor Miranda (bass), Peter Kaszas (drums), and with special guests from Morocco, Said Chraibi (oud), Abdellah Meri (violin) and Tari Ben Ali (percussion). Musically speaking, this is gorgeous stuff, with DiMeola's virtuoso skills on the nylon string on full display, though truth be told this really is a band effort all around, with plenty of time given to many of the musicians to contribute, especially Beccalossie. Many of the songs on display here have a flamenco/jazz/world/new age feel to them, so if you are looking for the fiery DiMeola material, you're not going to get much of that here, aside from the blazing rendition of "Egyptian Danza", where Al pulls out the electric guitar for the only time during the set and rips it up with the rest of the band. Otherwise, it's all gorgeous, silky stuff, with plenty of acoustic majesty from one of the true guitar legends.



The presentation of the Blu-ray however is pretty disappointing. Much of the video here can't be labeled true 'hi-definition' by any means. Most of the long shots are grainy and blurry, and it's not until the cameras are up close and zoomed in to any of the musicians that you really see some detail, but this medium has to offer. What's really

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can appreciate what this medium has to offer. What's really surprising are that the multitude of regional shots of Morocco that are spliced in throughout the concert are simply outstanding, sparkling with clarity and pristine color, yet much of the concert is sorely lacking in that capacity. The audio however is pretty good, so it makes up somewhat for the below average video. There are plenty of bonus features to be found here, though good luck finding them as the Blu-ray makes it near impossible to actually get to a menu at any spot to find them. Navigating to menus should not be this difficult. If you are an Al DiMeola fanatic, you'll probably need to have this, but truth be told I'm not sure it's worth shelling out the extra cash for the Blu-ray copy when the DVD might be about the same quality.

Track Listing

1. Misterio
2. Siberiana
3. Double Concerto
4. Michelangelo's 7th Child
5. Gumbiero
6. Turquoise
7. Encore
8. Egyptian Danza

Bonus Features-Rehearsals, Soundcheck, Roof solo, and more

Added: January 30th 2012

Reviewer: **Pete Pardo**

Score: ★★☆☆

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