

DeeExpus - *Far From Home*



Performance ★★★★★★☆☆
 Production ★★★★★★☆☆

DeeExpus are a progressive-rock band who hail from the northern England city of Durham. The band started out as solo project of songwriter, producer and multi-instrumentalist Andy Ditchfield until he ran into his old friend and singer Tony Wright one night at a local pub. After convincing him to join, the two eventually brought in a guitarist, keyboardist, bassist, and drummer to complete the project. The rather odd band name was taken from an abbreviation of an old nickname that used to belong to Ditchfield.

I first heard about this band via the excellent [review](#) of their debut CD, *Half Way Home*, from fellow Blogcritics writer Jeff Perkins. I immediately downloaded the MP3 version of the CD from Amazon.com and have been enjoying this superb debut ever since. Applying the "prog" label to this band stirred some debate amongst a few Blogcritics' commenters, because DeeExpus could be equally at home in the pop-rock genre. I guess when you have a 17-minute title track that incorporates various time signatures and spits in the face of the typical verse-chorus-verse song structure, you may find yourself lumped into the prog category.

When I heard that DeeExpus had recorded their performance at the first annual *Progrock Festival* in Poland earlier this year for an upcoming concert DVD release, it immediately jumped to the top of my must review list. It's one thing to be able to throw together a debut album as good as *Half Way Home*, but to be able to play this challenging music live after only a few months worth of rehearsals is another thing entirely. This was only their third live show to date.

Far From Home was recorded on February 17th, 2009 at the Wyspiański Theatre in Katowice, Poland, during the aforementioned *Progrock Festival*. This two day festival also featured the bands, RPWL Shadowland, SBB, Tinyfish, and Overhead - all of which have their own concert DVDs of the event coming out this year from Metal Mind Productions.

The setlist featured all seven songs from the *Half Way Home* CD, as well as a previously unreleased ballad that Ditchfield had written about six years ago called "Red." DeeExpus were the first of three bands to perform that night, which is probably why their set was so short at only 68 minutes. I'm sure they could have added a few incredible covers had they been allotted more time.

They kick off the proceedings with the opening *Half Way Home* track, "Greed," and this was a

wise choice. It is the heaviest track on the CD, and it is also my favorite. DeeExpus sounds very similar to Porcupine Tree on their debut, and this is not just a coincidence. Andy Ditchfield was so moved by a recent PT concert he attended, that he wrote the song "PTtee" to commemorate the experience. This 10-minute monster of a tribute borrows from several signature PT riffs and melodies, while also laying the groundwork for his band's own emerging style. I cant wait to see where this style takes them.

The highlight of the show for me was the epic *Half Way Home* title track, which was used to close their first set. Although it exceeds 17 minutes in length, it never bogs down for a second. The band returns for an encore that begins with the short piano and acoustic guitar instrumental, "One Day," and then closes with the most infectious track on the album, "7 Nights." The song begins with a rollicking bass line that is surrounded by some of the most delightful melodies and vocal harmonies on the album, before eventually rocking out into something that would have fit nicely on any Dream Theater album.

The DVD was produced by Metal Mind Productions and distributed by MVD Entertainment Group so you know that the packaging and production quality are going to be outstanding. The Metal Mind crew have a permanent presence at the Wyspiański Theatre, where most of their concert DVDs are produced, and they have the filming of these shows down to a science.

The audio is presented in both Dolby Digital 5.1 surround and Dolby 2.0 Stereo and they sound nearly flawless. The widescreen picture and camera work was also superb. The DVD is packed with the following bonus features:

- Interview with Andy Ditchfield and Tony Wright.
- "The Journey Home" documentary film.
- Photo gallery, biography, desktop images and weblinks.

The debut CD from DeeExpus already had me excited about what these guys could do next, and *Far From Home* certainly serves to reinforce that thought.

Reviewed by Paul M. Roy - July 2009

[Comments or Complaints?](#)

Technical Details	
<p><u>Audio Transfer</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dolby Digital 5.1 Surround • Dolby Digital 2.0 Stereo 	<p><u>Video Transfer</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1.78:1 - Anamorphic Widescreen
<p><u>Set List</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 01. Greed 02. PTtee 03. One 8 04. Pointless Child 05. Red 06. Half Way Home 07. One Day 08. 7 Nights 	<p><u>Performers</u></p> <p>Tony Wright - Vocals Steve Wright - Guitars/Backing Vocals Andy Ditchfield - Guitars/Vocals/Backing Vocals Ian Raine - Bass/Backing Vocals Kev Jager - Drums/Backing Vocals Marc Jolliffe - Keyboards</p>

Running Time: 68 Minutes

DVD Release Date - July 2009

Performance Date - February 2009



[Far from Home](#)

Deeexpus Project

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