

Music DVD Review: RPWL - *The RPWL Live Experience*

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If you are looking for something new to hold you over until the next Pink Floyd album that will never come, then have I got a band for you. RPWL are a German progressive rock band that began in 1997 as a Pink Floyd cover band, and have since released five albums of their very own Floyd-inspired tunes.

The band's name comes from the first letters of the original four member's last names. "Oh shit, we're about to take the stage for our first gig, and we don't even have a name yet. Somebody think quick!"

Okay, so it's not the first time initials were used for a band name, but at least the guys in CSN and ELP were already individually famous artists before starting those bands - and their abbreviations are usually used secondarily. If only they'd had one more band member with the letter "O" and then they could have called themselves PROWL. Now we're talking.

If RPWL's original music is any indication, these guys must have been one hell of a good Pink Floyd cover band. Their sound is still heavily influenced by the Floyd, especially the later Roger Waters-less period, but they also incorporate many other styles such as that of early Genesis, The Moody Blues, and even Coldplay. As I listened to this DVD, I couldn't but help think that most of the songs would have fit very nicely on David Gilmour's latest album, *On An Island*.

After three years of doing the Floyd thing, RPWL decided to have a go at their own music and released their 2000 debut album, the audaciously titled, *God Has Failed*. 2008 saw the release of their fifth studio album, *The RPWL Experience*, and a similarly named live album and concert DVD were released the following year.

The RPWL Live Experience was recorded on February 17th, 2009 at the Wyspiaski Theatre in Katowice, Poland, during the first annual Progrock Festival 2009. This two

day festival also featured the bands SBB, Shadowland, Tinyfish, Overhead and DeeExpus - all of which have their own concert DVDs of the event coming out this year from Metal Mind Productions.

They open the show with "Hole In The Sky," from their debut album, and then jump ahead to their most recent album with the very catchy "Breathe In, Breathe Out." During the performance, the quirky animated video that accompanies the song was played on the video screen. RPWL is not the most exciting band to watch play live, but they certainly have a very polished live sound.

The setlist touches upon all five of the studio albums, and their critically acclaimed 2005 album, *World Through My Eyes*, is most heavily represented with five tracks. A couple of deep covers are also performed, including a late '60s Syd Barrett song called "Opel." One of the set highlights was the terrifically bluesy take on Roger Waters' "Biding My Time," which was a lesser known song that only appeared on the Pink Floyd compilation album, *Relics*. Guitarist Kalle Wallner really gets to shine on this one.

This DVD is yet another excellent product from the gang at Metal Mind Productions. 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 Yogi Lang and Kalle Wallner.
- "Breath In, Breath Out" video clip.
- 2006 Tour Footage.
- Desktop images, photo gallery, biography, discography, and more.

The RPWL Live Experience was my first proper introduction to this band, and it left me a little underwhelmed. If you are already a fan of RPWL then you should eat this DVD right up though, because the performance and production are certainly both very good. I just may need a few more listens for this stuff to grow on me. In the meantime, I'll be off watching my David Gilmour DVDs.

Set List

01. Hole In The Sky
02. Breathe In, Breathe Out
03. 3 Lights
04. Start the Fire
05. Silenced
06. This Is Not a Prog Song
07. Sleep
08. Opel
09. Waiting for a Smile
10. Trying to Kiss the Sun
11. Wasted Land
12. Roses

13. Biding My Time
14. I Don't Know

Ratings:

Performance - 7/10

Production - 9/10