



by James McQuiston

Andromeda - Playing Off The Board / 2007 MVD / 205 Minutes / <http://www.musicvideodistributors.com> / This Swedish progressive metal act has been around a relatively short time, providing their own take on the prog scene since 1999. The band has been able to cut four albums in that time, and this DVD shows the band touring in support of their last album - 2006's Chimara. Instead of merely focusing on the tracks from their latest album, Andromeda pick out a selection of tracks from both the past and present, seemingly representing all albums equally well. Out of all of the progressive metal DVDs that have been released in the last few months, Andromeda's "Playing Off The Board" has to be the one that is most jam-packed with valuable extras.

Taken all together, this DVD 's features will keep fans interested for almost three and a half hours. This includes the 12 tracks played during the live show, along with two different interviews, three different mini-documentaries, and older live videos for three of their prior hits ("Arch Angel", "Extension of the Wish", and "Crescendo of Thoughts").

Andromeda's music rips through listener's ears, while the band comes through with a personality that is sadly lacking in many metal-related acts. Fans both old and new alike will like the progressions each member contribute to what are very intricate and difficult arrangements. This DVD acts more as a capstone for the band, as it is the culmination of all the band had created and worked on for the last seven years (to that point).

By including older tracks at this concert, the members of Andromeda weave together a story about their existence as a band. The added features on this DVD further explicate the story and given individuals the full bit of information about the band. This is an essential purchase for any fan of Andromeda, and will undoubtedly keep individuals sated until 2008 or 2009, whenever it is that Andromeda is able to release their follow-up to "Chimara". I may not have been familiar with the act before this DVD came across my doorstep, but after focusing in on the band for the entirety of the 205 minute runtime, I feel like I know a lot about this Swedish powerhouse.

Andromeda is an act that speaks to the current, even when one considers that they would have succeeded just as well in 1987 as they do in 2007. This timelessness is just one of the many things that makes this band so compelling.

Top Tracks: Eclipse, Two Is One

Rating: 7.0/10