



Courtesy of Carl Palmer Band (Used with permission)

Ever heard of Emerson, Lake & Mitchell? The band doesn't and never did exist, but it could have, as the now-deceased Mitch Mitchell of the Jimi Hendrix Experience auditioned in 1970 to be the drummer in Keith Emerson and Greg Lake's new band. That combination probably would have realized a successful group but when [Carl Palmer](#) won the spot and Emerson, Lake & Palmer (ELP) was born, so was a group destined for greatness.

With Emerson's penchant for classical melodies, Lake's distinct vocal styling and Palmer's intricate but powerful drumming technique, ELP would over their career produce massive radio hits like "Lucky Man," underground radio favorites like "Still... You Turn Me On" and [epic](#) prog-rock manifestos like 1977's twin album releases *Works, Vol. 1* and *Works, Vol. 2*.

While Palmer's legacy will forever be tied to his work with ELP, the percussionist has had a storied career prior to and after that band. Palmer drummed for The Crazy World of Arthur Brown ("Fire") after that band's original skins man freaked out, and he was also the man behind the kit in Atomic Rooster, a significant band whose albums are treasures for thrift store crate diggers. After ELP's demise Palmer found success with Asia ("Heat of the Moment," "Only Time Will Tell"), in the band 3 where he reunited with Emerson, and with half a dozen solo albums. But Palmer's most recent release celebrates once again the music of ELP.

Palmer has been performing live with his Carl Palmer Band for the last dozen or so years, and earlier this year [MVD Visuals](#) released a DVD featuring the band's performance at the 2011 MusikFest in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania. [Decade: The 10th Anniversary Tour](#) find's Carl and bandmates Paul Bielatowics (guitar) and Simon Fitzpatrick (bass) running through 12 ELP numbers, an interesting idea considering that the Carl Palmer Band has no keyboardist or singer. But the trio makes it work very nicely, using guitar riffs to replace the keyboard parts on the fusion jam "Welcome Back My Friends to the Show that Never Ends (Karn Evil 9 2nd Impression)" and some creative bass work from Fitzpatrick to replace the song's vocal part.

"Tarkus," "Bitches Crystal" and Bela Bartok's "Barbarian" are also performed flawlessly, as are other ELP signature tunes like "Fanfare For the Common Man" and Mussorgsky's "Pictures at an Exhibition." The entire show is extremely lively but Palmer saves the raucous "Nutrocker" for the final number. And with Palmer touring with his own band while also working again with Asia, you'd have to be off your nut to think this rocker's legacy is anywhere near complete.

Go [here](#) for more on Carl Palmer



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