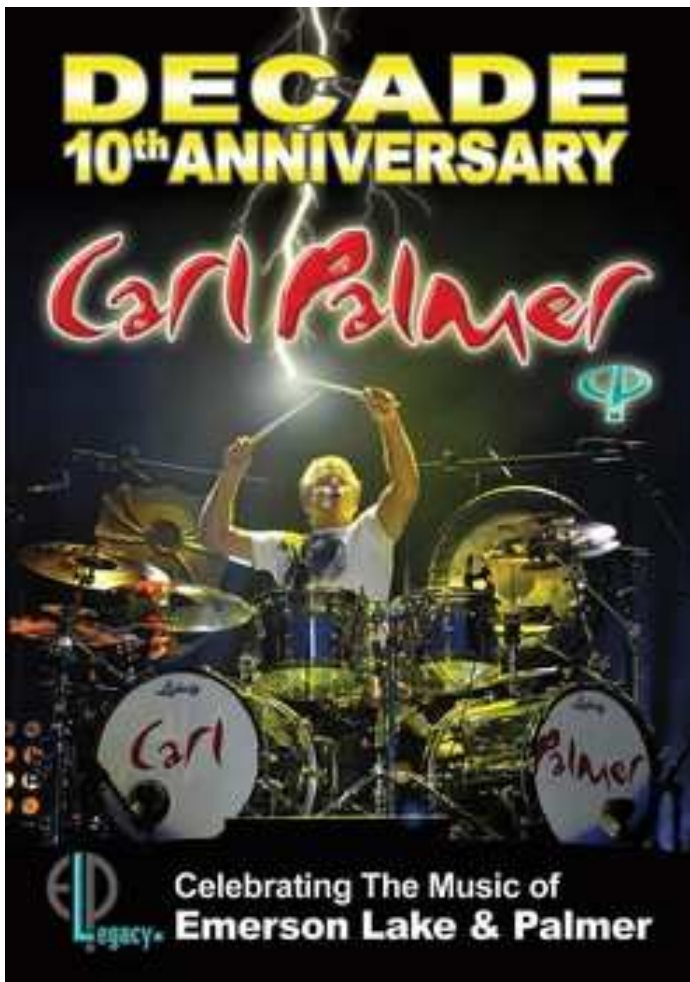


Paul McCartney forced to postpone U.S. 'Out There!' tour dates originally scheduled for June

Carl Palmer celebrates ten years of recreating ELP music with concert DVD



MVD Visual



Peter Roche
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Decade: 10th Anniversary DVD
by Carl Palmer

Rating:

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Carl Palmer's certainly been keeping busy.

The legendary ELP drummer—and part-time painter—has a new exhibit (“Rhythm of Light”) on display at Effusion Gallery in Miami. Palmer’s been recording and touring on-and-off with his musical super-friends in Asia for six years running, and will hit the road with them again later this year in support of their new album, *Gravitas*. As we write this, he’s a working a Caribbean cruise with Moody Blues and Roger Daltrey.

Palmer’s latest live DVD, *Decade: 10th Anniversary*, looks back on ten years of rocking ELP classics with his own Carl

Palmer Trio. Filmed before a capacity crowd in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania on October 16, 2011, the video captures Palmer, guitarist Paul Bielatowicz, and bassist Simon Fitzpatrick tearing through progressive epics and fan favorites from now-iconic LPs like *Trilogy*, *Tarkus*, and *Works*.

Fans cueing up *Decade* hoping for another drum tutorial will be disappointed. While it's possible that observant students and flam fetishists might pick up a few things, this DVD is more concert spectacle than percussion primer—an ELP video extravaganza whereon Palmer, Bielatowicz, and Fitzpatrick receive equal screen time and democratically divvy spotlight solos and complex passages on their respective instruments. There are plenty of “how-to” titles available on Carl's website ([link below](#)), including some from MVD Visual.

Following a “thanks for joining me” greeting from Palmer himself, the concert proper commences with “Welcome Back My Friends to the Show That Never Ends (Karn Evil Second Impression)” and the Bela Bartok-inspired “Barbarian” (from ELP's 1970 debut).

Come the jaw-dropping rearrangement of Aaron Copeland's “Hoedown” (from 1972's *Trilogy*), any viewers with nagging doubts about Palmer's longhaired young cohorts will come to appreciate their monster musicianship: Bielatowicz is a classically-influenced shredder whose rapid-fire fingerings and ethereal effects sound alternately beautiful and terrifying when pumped through a Marshall stack, and bearded bassist Fitzpatrick possesses the both the technical expertise and muscle memory needed to play just about anything on his six-string—from funky pops and thumb-slaps to spindly, two-handed arpeggios.

“Bitches Crystal” and “Abadon's Bolero” are followed by *Tarkus*' breathless, 20-minute title opus and some impromptu jamming. The middle section is highlighted by a majestic “Karelia Suite” and Palmer's everything-but-the-kitchen-sink showstopper, “Pictures at An Exhibition.” The trio revisits Copeland with a drum solo-seasoned “Fanfare for the Common Man,” pull out all the stops on “*Trilogy*,” and encore with the Tchaikovsky-on-steroids stomper “Nutrocker.”

Sometimes Bielatowicz's guitar sounds like a keyboard, or Fitzpatrick's bass sounds like a guitar. It's no accident: The guys explain in the bonus interview section how they had to absorb Greg Lake's grooves and Keith Emerson's keyboard parts to faithfully render the ELP epics. So they accepted (or were assigned) specific passages, sounds, and textures, and adjust their gear accordingly onstage.

Those familiar with Palmer's oeuvre and abilities already know the man can hit as hard or

soft as he pleases, can drum faster than the speed of light (while crossing his arms), , and will occasionally strike a gong for cinematic emphasis. He does all at that here, periodically indulging in ricochet stick stunts and fancy footwork not so much for the sheer sake of showing off, but rather because of how well the visual “gags” translate live.

The 100-minute concert—shot on several cameras from multiple angles (mostly from audience POV)—is enhanced by clever video clips on a screen above Palmer. Sometimes it’s just swirling swathes of colors and patterns, but some songs are accompanied by more substantial imagery. For example, “Hoedown” appropriately features a cowboy / Western movie motif replete with snapshots of mesas, canyons, and cacti.

Bielatowicz and Fitzpatrick talk ELP transcriptions and gear on the DVD extras, and note how the “fresh arrangements” leave room for them to inject their own personalities into the music. Maestro Palmer himself reflects on an epiphany he had in Spain in 2001 which prompted the idea of forming “a trio again” to act as vehicle for ELP. Manager Bruce Pilato describes the challenges encountered by an instrumental group re-imagining songs that originally had vocals and discusses how the drummer likes being accessible and connecting with fans.

“It’s a win-win,” Pilato concludes.

We concur.

<http://www.amazon.com/Palmer-Carl-Anniversary-Celebrating-Emerson/dp/B00...>

<http://www.carlpalmer.com>

<https://paulbielatowicz.com>

<http://www.simon-fitzpatrick.com>