



Echo & The Bunnymen

Dancing Horses

Live At Shepperds Bush Empire

(MVD Visual, 2007)

Legendary English, post-punk-rockers Echo & The Bunnymen have crooned their hypnotic blend of alternative rock for nearly 30 years, forming in Liverpool in 1978 and becoming one of the original and most influential bands of the early alternative/new wave scenes entering the 1980's.

The original lineup consisted of front man Ian McCulloch, guitarist Will Sergeant, bassist Les Pattison and a drum machine, which many believe to be the "Echo". Drummer Pete de Freitas (who died in a motorcycle accident in 1989) would then join on as the band released their debut album *Crocodiles* in 1980.

Although the band would enjoy much greater success in the UK than America, their early cult status blossomed by the mid-80's with such UK Top 20 singles "The Cutter", (1980) "The Back Of Love", (1982) "Never Stop", (1982) "The Killing Man", (1983) "Bring On The dancing Horses", (1984) and "Lips Of Sugar".

After several record label changes and a subsequent break up in 1988 when McCulloch left to pursue a solo career, the original line up reformed in 1997 and have released five more titles since, including 2005's *Siberia*, which produced the footage for the new DVD release *Dancing Horses* released by MVD Visual.

Filmed and recorded at London's Shepperds Bush Empire on November 1, 2005, Bunnymen main-stays McCulloch and Sergeant are joined by Simon Finley (drums), Gordon Goudie (guitar), Paul Fleming (keyboards) and Stephen Brannan (bass) for a 20-song set of vintage Bunnymen that offers a good balance between old favorites and few newer songs sprinkled in. Also included is an exclusive interview with McCulloch and Sergeant.

This electrifying show is full of various textures and mood swings, from the cutting-edge rockers "The Cutter and "Villiers Terrace", to the dream-like trances of "Nothing Lasts Forever" and "Bring On The Dancing Horses", to the fan favorites "Killing Moon", "Lips Like Sugar" and "Never Stop". The newer "Scissors In The Sand" is also very interesting and well worth mentioning.

Although not as energetic on stage as he once was, McCulloch still comes through with an engaging performance, while Sergeant and new-comer Goudie create a swirling duel-guitar sound which successfully emulates that Bunnymen signature sound of days gone by.

With *Dancing Horses* Echo & The Bunnymen show they remain relevant 25 years running with they're unique brand of dark, entrancing sounds and presence, making this release a must for not only the faithful followers, but also those who may recall the Bunnymen name, but somehow missed out on the music.

- Joe Milliken

