

Riverside - *Reality Dream*



Performance ★★★★★★☆☆
Production ★★★★★★☆☆

Polish progressive metal band Riverside have been hailed as one of the best new bands of the genre since releasing their impressive debut album, *Out Of Myself*, in 2004. The band has since released three more equally impressive studio albums, along with this first concert DVD, *Reality Dream*, which has been in the works for nearly two years now, and has now finally seen the light of day.

Riverside's music showcases a variety of influences including Pink Floyd, Porcupine Tree, and Opeth (sans the horrible growling vocals). Although they are typically lumped into the Progressive Metal genre, they fall far closer to the Marillion, Porcupine Tree melodic-prog side of the tracks. Mariusz Duda's extraordinary vocals are what really elevate this band to the top of the heap. He can be both gently soothing and brutally powerful within the scope of the same song. Duda also handles the bass guitar duties, and I was amazed at how effortlessly he lays down intricate bass lines while simultaneously singing lead. I guess Geddy Lee isn't the only magician in town.

The rest of the band, Piotr Grudziński (guitar), Michał Łapaj (keyboards), and Piotr Kozieradzki (drums) all have the required virtuosity of a top shelf progressive rock unit, and they play marvelously here. *Reality Dream* was filmed at the Toya Studios in Lodz, Poland, on May 17th, 2008, and it features material from the band's first three albums, *Out Of Myself* (2004), *Second Life Syndrome* (2005), and *Rapid Eye Movement* (2007) - collectively known as the "Reality Dream Trilogy".

The concert begins with the two leadoff tracks off *Out Of Myself*, "The Same River," and the title track, and they are two of the band's finest. "The Same River" begins with a long atmospheric intro that gains steam from Piotr Grudziński's hypnotic arpeggios and gorgeous Steve Rothery-esque guitar solos. This was about all it took for me to know that these guys are top-notch live performers and that I was in for one hell of a treat.

However, as great as these guys sound live, they often looked like they were being held on stage at gun point. This is one of the most serious and somber bands I have ever seen - but, hey, this is some pretty serious and somber music. Prior the third song, "Volte-Face," Duda finally greets the crowd, as he and the rest of the band lead them in a brief chant. One of them may even have cracked a smile. From here, they expertly weave through material from the Reality Dream Trilogy before closing out the set with the *Out of Myself* number, "The Curtain Falls." I loved the way they

slowly wound down the song, with each band member leaving the stage one at a time as the rest of the band continued to play.

The encore set is found on disc 2 and it is highlighted by the 14-minute, *Rapid Eye Movement* epic, "The Curtain Falls," which closes out the concert. The 13-song setlist covers 108 minutes and convincingly validates Riverside as one of the premier progressive rock bands in the world today. Disc 2 also contains seven bonus live performances, "Beyond The Eyelids," "Loose Heart," "Back To The River," "Conceiving You," "I Believe," "Lucid Dream IV," and "Reality Dream II," taken from shows in Germany, Holland and Canada between 2006 and 2008, and none of the songs are repeats from the main concert feature.

Other special features include a 15-minute behind-the-scenes film titled "Behind the Curtain", which shows the stage and studio being set up for the show, a little bit of sound checking, and some fan meet-and-greets. It wasn't particularly interesting because you never really got to hear anything from any of the band members. A photo gallery is also included. The two-DVD set is housed in a nice tri-fold cardboard case with a ten-page color booklet filled with band photos.

The production quality of the DVDs are excellent overall. I was disappointed that the only audio option offered is Dolby Stereo, but it is amongst one of the best I have heard. The instruments and vocals are crystal clear and perfectly mixed. The widescreen picture looked superb, and the camera work put you right amongst the small crowd that was lucky enough to attend the show.

Now for the bad part. The video is inundated with ridiculous post-production special effects that nearly ruin this otherwise excellent concert video. Whoever the idiot was who "enhanced" this DVD, he is obviously a student of the Lasse Hoile school of video special effects. For those of you who don't know, Hoile is the mastermind behind all of the Porcupine Tree videos, and the one who nearly ruined their *Arriving Somewhere* DVD. I beg of you guys - please stop this nonsense!

If you actually prefer watching your favorite band from behind the artificial lens of an old, scratched-up, black and white, 8-mm film, instead of the pristine, Hi-Def, color video it was actually shot in, then you are just going to love what this editor has done with this DVD. I'm still looking for that one person out there who actually prefers these effects laden concert videos over the real thing. Please email me and explain yourself if you do.

Reviewed by Paul M. Roy - April 2010

[Comments or Complaints?](#)

Technical Details	
<p><u>Audio Transfer</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dolby Digital 2.0 Stereo 	<p><u>Video Transfer</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1.78:1 - Widescreen
<p><u>Track List</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 01. Intro 02. The Same River 03. Out of Myself 04. Volte-Face 05. Rainbow Box 06. 02 Panic Room 	<p><u>Performers</u></p> <p>Mariusz Duda - Vocals/Bass Piotr Grudziński - Guitars Michał Łapaj - Keyboards/Backing Vocals Piotr Kozieradzki - Drums</p>

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| 07. Reality Dream III
08. I Turned You Down
09. Dance With The Shadow
10. Parasomnia
11. Second Life Syndrome
12. The Curtain Falls
<i>Encores:</i>
13. Before
14. Ultimate Trip | |
| Running Time: 108 Minutes | DVD Release Date - February 2010
Performance Date - May 2008 |



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n/a

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