

RUSH - R30: ANNIVERSARY TOUR DVD



Unfortunately, though perhaps inevitably, the *Rush: R30 - 30th Anniversary World Tour* DVD cannot be reviewed on its own terms following so close on the heels of the *Rush in Rio* DVD, as there are barely two years between their releases. *Rush in Rio* was the band's first full-throttle DVD - a chronicle of their glorious *Vapor Trails* tour - and a flawed one, at that. *R30* has some considerable improvements over its predecessor but is still not without its own problems - this time being more on the content side than in the technical aspects.

Rush in Rio succeeded in capturing the excitement and energy of Rush's first show since the '96-'97 *Test for Echo* tour. All three members of the band, pushing 50 at the time, were all at the top of their game. Gone was the strict *precision* that plagued some of their previous tours. The boys were actually experimenting and making mistakes - in other words, there was a spontaneity to the *Vapor Trails* tour that was missing from most of their other tours from *Hold Your Fire* (1987) forward. Most importantly, Geddy Lee, Alex Lifeson and Neil Peart seemed like they were actually having more *fun* than usual. Unfortunately, the sound and look of the *Rio* DVD was pretty, well, awful.



R30 certainly improves on those aspects. The sound in Dolby Digital 5.1 delivers the thunderous assault on the senses that was the 30th anniversary tour, and the vision - shot on high-def video cameras - is much sharper and cleaner. The editing style is also much more disciplined - while *Rio* at times seemed like there was a cut every two seconds, *R30* holds its shots longer, allowing us to really watch and appreciate these talented musicians doing their thing.



The show itself leaves something to be desired - about eight or nine songs worth, actually. While *Rio* was certainly impressive in including *every single song* the band played on the *Vapor Trails* tour, there are several songs missing from the line-up on *R30* (very jarring omissions, including amazing songs that sound even more amazing when performed live, such as "Bravado," "YYZ," "The Trees," "One Little Victory" and "Secret Touch," to name a few). With such essential songs to the Rush repertoire missing, the set list on the DVD seems almost embarrassingly incomplete - do we really need to have covers of "Summertime Blues" and "The Seeker" at the expense of "By-Tor and the Snow Dog" and "La Villa Strangiato?" Yes, all of these missing songs are featured on the *Rio* DVD, but for a set list that's supposed to summarize a 30-year career, such omissions are upsetting.

However, there are songs on the set list to be cherished. It's actually pretty amazing to see "Between the Wheels" (from 1984's *Grace Under Pressure*) performed live for the first time in 20 years, and the opening medley (consisting of some of their '70s hits such as "Finding My Way," "Anthem" and even parts of "Hemispheres") will make any longtime Rush fan jump for joy. Also, though the

boys seem a little tired as compared to their borderline hyperactivity on the *Rio* DVD, they're still at the top of their game musically.

The extras are also an improvement over the *Rio* DVD. All of the interviews with the band members are interesting and sometimes extremely funny, and the concert footage from the '70s is a treat. There's also a performance of "Closer to the Heart" (another song absurdly missing from the concert set list) from the Canadian Tsunami Relief Benefit from earlier this year.
