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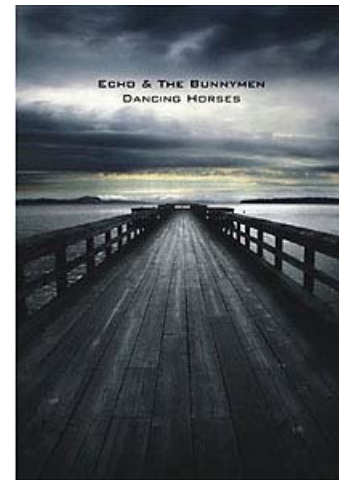
A skimpy and low-fi production that's still worth it

Echo & The Bunnymen - *Dancing Horses* DVD Review

(MVD Visual)

3 stars (out of 5 stars)

Reviewed: July 14, 2007



Story and live photo by Andy Argyrakis

The line-up may have shifted and the group has switched record labels on numerous occasions, but one element Echo & The Bunnymen has consistently stuck to its hypnotic, post-punk/new wave-tipped blend of alternative rock. Whether it was the band's middle to late 1980s peak commercial period or more recent years, those suave and entrancing sounds remain relevant and essential to faithful followers. In this particular project's case, the concert footage was filmed during the 2005 tour in support of *Siberia* (Cooking Vinyl), a generally solid album that found critical acceptance, despite failing to sell to the degrees of its heyday. Yet the nucleus of singer Ian McCulloch and guitarist Will Sergeant seemed undaunted throughout a mixture of relatively new cuts and greatest hits in this sold out performance from Shepherds Bush Empire.



The interplay between the past and present is evident throughout the 19-song set, pitting the brooding newcomer "Stormy Weather" against the classic "Bring On the Dancing Horses," both of which showcase a remarkably tight band and a complimentary sonic thread. The recent "Scissors In the Sand" grinds with gritty firmness, which is followed by the rippling bass beats and dramatic guitar jangles of "All That Jazz." The gang gets even dirtier come "The Cutter," a longtime favorite for its delightfully feverish cult following that's aged remarkably well (a trait later passed on to the prominent single "Lips Like Sugar," which brings up the set list's rear in grand fashion).

Even though the group is at the top of its game, the DVD has an extremely dark quality that's additionally hindered at times by low-fi production and grainy imaging. Though this type of footage presentation was likely meant to induce a certain sense

of cool on the home viewing audience, it lacks the rich quality of a more polished release. The collection is also a slightly skimpy on extras, which aside from a new 40-minute interview with Echo's key duo, is void of any truly revealing behind the scenes preparation or production footage. And while this drawbacks aren't enough to discourage a purchase, they detract from an otherwise brilliant performance that will hopefully inspire the band to get back in the studio and then on the road.

**Watch Echo & The Bunnymens' -
"Bring On The Dancing Horses" video**

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