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"A sinister cabal of superior writers."

Music DVD Review: Voivod - *Tatsumaki*

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Author: Greg Barbrick — Published: Dec 03, 2009 at 10:39 pm

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It has been a busy year for Canadian prog-metal titans Voivod. After suffering the loss of founding guitarist Denis "Piggy" D'Amour in 2005, the band almost packed it in completely. But after a period of mourning, they decided to stay together. At first they went back into the studio to finish the final tracks Piggy had played on, which were released last summer as the *Infini* album.

To get their chops back in shape though, Voivod did a tour of Japan in 2008. And that is where the live DVD *Tatsumaki* was recorded. The first order of business became finding someone to play guitar at anywhere near the level of Piggy. Fortunately, the band did not have to look far. They found Dan Mongrain in Quebec, and he has slotted in nicely.

The show opens up with a super-charged take on their anthemic song "Voivod," and never lets up. Right off the bat, Mongrain shows what he is made of with a smokin' hot solo. The pace never lets up as the band rip through great live versions of "The Unknown Knows," "Overreaction," "Panorama," and "Nothingface," to mention a few highlights of the 12 song set.

Their finale has to be seen to be believed though. Since I have never seen the band live, I can only speculate that they have been performing this tune for a while in their set, but in any case, it is incredible. They pull out the great, acid-drenched "Astronomy Domine." The song was written by the late Syd Barrett, and comes from the classic first Pink Floyd LP, *The Piper At The Gates Of Dawn*.

Voivod just tear this song apart. It is an awesome spectacle, and worth the price of the DVD alone.

As for bonus materials on *Tatsumaki*, there are some pretty good things. First is a cool interview with Dave Grohl, who has been a fan for years. There is also a three song mini-set recorded in July 2009 in Quebec City. The songs the band performs to this rabid crowd are "Panorama," "Treasure Chase," and "Tornado."

Finally, they have included the unreleased mini-documentary *Panorama: Seeking Voivod*. The dialogue is spoken in French, with English subtitles.

In sum, *Tatsumaki* is an excellent DVD document of their Japanese tour, and a great way to see the band, and their new man onstage.

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Greg Barbrick is an old time "music biz" groupie/writer. He thinks that nothing good has been recorded since 1978.






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