So Long to The Black Parade

Sarah Werth

University of the Pacific, s_werth@u.pacific.edu

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Cover Page Footnote
www.mychemicalromance.com https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ud2ezi0jjTo
So Long to The Black Parade
By Sarah Werth

On October 7th, 2007 at Palacio de Los Deportes in Mexico City, Mexico, the band My Chemical Romance performed for the last time as their persona’s The Black Parade. The Black Parade was the third studio album from the band and was released in 2006. It was a rock-opera concept album that centered around a dying character known as “The Patient” and his experiences with death and the afterlife as he reflects back on his life. The album is certified three times platinum in the US by the RIAA and was written and performed by Gerard Way (vocals), Mikey Way (bass), Ray Toro (lead guitar), Frank Iero (rhythm guitar), and Bob Bryar (drums) (with help from James Dewees on synth and percussion and Matt Cortez on acoustic guitar for the concert). The venue was lit in blue light for most of the performance and the band wore ghostly, pale, white facial makeup and military-esque black and white uniforms as a nod to the video for their titular song, “Welcome to The Black Parade.” The audience was excited and already screaming for the band before the concert officially started.

The band played a total of 12 songs for the performance, all off their latest album and following the rock genre of “The Black Parade.” The set began with lead singer Gerard Way coming on stage atop a gurney in a hospital gown. The first song, “Dead!” contained a slightly different vocalization and pitch than the original studio recording but it was performed with great energy and the crowd went wild for it. The song ended in a total blackout of the venue, the only thing you could see were the cellphone lights from the crowd before a light show started, moving in time with the bass riffs and drums for “This Is How I Disappear.” The following song, “The Sharpest Lives,” started a little lackluster and felt very flat until the chorus, when the energy on stage and in the audience kicked up. A little over two minutes into the song the stage exploded...
with flares as the audience and band were at the peak of the energy for the performance. However, for most of this performance (as well as a few of the other performances) it was very hard to understand as Way’s vocal delivery because he was obviously out of breath and on top of that he was swallowing a lot of the words to fit everything into the song.

As the band went into “Welcome to the Black Parade” the venue looked like it was full of stars from all of the audience members cell phone lights, and from the first G-note played (the note that every emo kid knows by heart), the audience erupted. They sang every word with the band and pushed the entire show’s energy up ten-fold. The performance of this song was a lot more dramatic than the previous songs and had a lot more movement, but there was a great atmosphere. As Way performed the band’s anthem he engaged the audience from all sides of the stage and his pronunciation and diction were much clearer. When the song came to a close the stage erupted with smoke and the venue was filled with confetti that most of the audience could be seen attempting to catch as it fell. The stage went black once more as the band started in on the emotional number of the concert, the song “Cancer.” Way sang alone on stage inside of a single spotlight surrounded by pitch black on all other sides. The most that was visible was a delicate silhouette as the piano played a tune much softer than those previously played. There was no movement with the exception of gestures prompting the audience to take over (through the rest of the song the audience was much quieter than even before the concert). The song was an incredibly intimate moment between Gerard Way and the audience members, with the most noticeable part of the performance being the very end where he makes the audience go completely silent before belting out the longest note of the night to end the song.

Following a brief interlude the band began the song, “Mama,” which had moments where the stage was alight with flames and noticeably red undertones on top of black and white themed
lighting instead of the blue seen throughout the first half of the performance. As the song came to a close, Way spoke the words, “A surprise party? For me? You shouldn’t have.” This is notable simply because up to this point he had only said things to encourage the audience to jump or sing along. The band started in on “Teenagers” (another one of the band’s hits) and it was kind of a letdown. The singing was flat at the beginning, it didn’t sound like the studio recording, Gerard Way seemed like he was sick of the song or simply getting bored with performing it. It was entertaining, however, when in the middle of the song, Way did the chicken dance on stage. After 48 minutes of performing the band finally addressed the audience, asking how they’re doing and explaining the reason for the performance being recorded (it was the last performance in the band's Black Parade persona for this particular album cycle). Way proceeded to state that the following song “(was) about dreams. It’s called…‘Disenchanted.’” The song started with an acoustic guitar before the full band and audience joined in at the lyrics, “roar of the crowd,” as the stage was flooded in sparks. This pushed the overall energy up one last time for the final performance of the night, “Famous Last Words,” which made use of the flames on stage once more and brought the concert to a close. The final statement from the band for the night being, “The Black Parade Is Dead!”

Overall the performance was great! The band engaged with the audience throughout the numerous numbers performed and it seemed that everyone involved had a good night. Gerard Way was noticeably sassy throughout the night, blowing numerous kisses to the audience, shaking his butt, and cocking his hip during certain aspects of the performance. The venue had great sound quality and every aspect of the stage was perfectly balanced. Unfortunately, there was no encore and the band has since broken up so there will be no more performances at all. I enjoyed the concert immensely and would recommend that any fan of the band check out the album the songs
were from, as well as recommending they look into some of the solo work from the band members, as Gerard, Frank, and Ray have all gone on to release solo albums. All in all, the night was memorable and the crowd left feeling that concert high people get after watching something amazing.