

Cheap Trick  
Cheap Trick

at Budokan



the Complete Concert

1978

Thank you Japan for Cheap Trick's first tour of your country. We would like to thank the thousands of people who attended our concerts and the millions who heard us on radio and saw us on TV. We would also like to thank the many people behind the scenes - the crews and touring staff, the promoters, magazines, photographers, disc jockeys and EPIC/SONY - for making this, our tour of Japan, a very pleasant and successful experience. This record, which was recorded on tour, is a sampling of the music and excitement we shared with you in our performances, and if you missed it we hope to see you next time when Bob, Robin, Bud F and I come again to Japan to enjoy your country and play our music for you.

Bono Brigate  
Rick Nielsen

1988

44 Sublime: The Sublime Record

The last time I write in this space we thanked Japan for welcoming Cheap Trick on our first tour there. Since that time we haven't stopped recording or touring. We've played in front of millions of people and we've set thousands of fans free across the world. Thanks to you, Sublime and Cheap Trick are synonymous. Little did we know that our 44 Sublime recordings would still mean something today - musically or otherwise. Now, for the first time, we finally have the opportunity to set the record straight and present the whole show from the original master tapes, in the correct and full song order as originally performed. On this special anniversary, we're able to give you the Sublime Concert sensibly presented in its entirety as we wish technology could have allowed for back then. We feel that this embodies the excitement that we felt then and that so many of you come to be a part of.

Once again,  
Bono Brigate  
We'll see you out  
on the road

*Rick Nielsen*

リック・ニールセン



By 1979 Cheap Trick was overdue. Now and then the Rockford, Illinois quartet had glimpsed the vastness of larger venues, opening for marquee acts like Kiss, The Kinks, Santana and Boston, but most of Cheap Trick's formative years were spent slugging it out in the cramped bars and clubs of America, particularly those throughout the Midwest. Their first three albums for Epic Records - Cheap Trick, In Color and Heaven Tonight - all scored favorable notices from the critics, but none sold sensationally well or produced a bona fide hit single. The band members, their manager, their producer, their record label - everyone was counting on Cheap Trick's fourth release to be the one to finally break them big in America. Sure enough, it did break them big in America, and in the rest of the world to boot. Only it wasn't the album everyone expected, and it didn't happen the way anyone planned.



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*Cheap Trick At Budokan* wasn't supposed to be any big deal. Recorded over the course of two nights at Tokyo's Budokan Hall, during the band's inaugural visit to Japan in late April 1978, the concert album was intended exclusively for the Japanese market, a token of appreciation for a fan base whose sight-unseen support of Cheap Trick - two gold albums, a clutch of hit singles and several spreads in the country's leading music mags - was unmatched anywhere in the world. It was impossible to imagine that something so seemingly off-the-cuff and territorially targeted as Budokan would remain on Billboard's Pop Albums chart for over a year (peaking at #4 in the spring of 1979) or go on to sell four million-plus copies in the United States alone.

"Before we left, I don't think we really took it all that seriously," bassist Tom Peterson says of Cheap Trick's disposition toward their Japanese junket. "It was just one other thing we were doing at the time. We didn't think, 'let's go over there and do a live record and see if we can make it work.' There wasn't any master plan." Drummer and resident Cheap Trick historian Ron E. Carlos remembers one exchange that perfectly encapsulated the band's unassuming attitude: "When [lead vocalist] Robin [Zander] and Tom saw the cover artwork, they said, 'We look like a couple of sheep! like a couple of midgets!' We were like, 'Oh, don't worry, no one's gonna ever see it outside of Japan.'" That was the big joke at the time."

Apparently, neither disc jockeys nor record buyers back in the States were in on the big joke. Immediately following its October 1978 release in Japan, a handful of hip American DJs, especially those at Boston's WBCN, began spinning cuts from

*Budokan*. Cheap Trick loyalists pledged their allegiance as well, shelling out \$14.98

(then, nearly twice the going rate for an LP) for imported copies.

In response to this unanticipated ripple effect, Epic's U.S. branch

dispatched from Tokyo To You a promotional 12-

inch containing seven tracks culled from *Budokan* - to rock

radio stations across the country. Then the ripple

turned into a torrent. "*Budokan* became one of the biggest

selling imports in the U.S.," guitarist Rick Nielsen explains. "At first I think the record company thought it was just a phase, but then people began to hear what Cheap Trick really sounded like."



Cheap Trick *At Budokan*, the Complete Concert reissue producer Bruce Dickinson recalls a telling incident from his days as rock/pop buyer at the Harvard Coop, a high-volume retailer in Cambridge, Massachusetts. "The Japanese import was selling amazingly well, especially for such an expensive record. One morning our CBS sales guy came in and looked at the store's Top 25 sellers, which I always posted on the wall. He saw that Cheap Trick was at #8. 'What's that?' he asked. 'Did Heaven Tonight have a resurgence?' 'No,' I said, 'that's the new album.' He looked puzzled. 'What new album?' He didn't even know what I was talking about. One of the sales guys told him we were selling at least 100 import copies a week. The wheels started turning in his head. He asked to use the telephone and called the head of Epic A&R in New York. Eventually, Epic changed its mind and released the album in the States (in February of 1979). And the rest is history."

If the runaway success of *Budokan* came as a shock, it was nonetheless a shock that made perfect sense. Cheap Trick had always been first and foremost a live phenomenon, routinely playing upwards of 150 shows a year. "We were the road dogs of all time," Carlos says. "We sounded better live than we did on any of our records." On stage, Cheap Trick came alive in profound ways: raw arrangements, overdriven amps and in-your-face delivery galvanized their (sometimes) studio-slick songcraft. And badder's, almost magically, their impossibly motley personas - Nielsen's bug-eyed, bow-tie-and-top court jester; Carlos' bespectacled, cigarette-flaunted banker; Goner and Peterssen's ultra-cool rock-star legends - transformed from two-dimensional album-jacket caricatures into animated exhibitionists.

*Budokan* showcased the band's performative prowess to startling effect. From

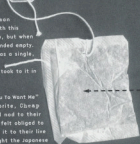
the blistering "Revolution"-like guitar blast of "Kills Them Here" to the headbanging abandon of "Clock Strikes Ten," Bushon was (and is now more than ever, thanks to this expanded edition's inclusion of nine extra tracks from the original concerts) an aural juggernaut, deploying Cheap Trick's inspired marriage of tuneful power-pop and heavy-metal clangor sans the studio niceties. Peterson, Carlos and especially Nielsen show off their hard-riffing virtuosity in songs like "Need Your Love" and the rousing Fats Domino cover "Ain't That A Shame," deftly maneuvering in and out of protracted, complex passages and joyously engaging in ad-libbed interplay. Likewise, Zander - the man of a thousand voices - is in fine form and full throat throughout, breathlessly beseeching a coy "little girl" in "Come On, Come On," tremulously crooning his broken-hearted devotion in "Need Your Love," and playfully articulating the Oedipal anxieties of a snot-nosed youth in "Surrender."

Of course, Bushon also begot "I Want You to Want Me," the song that in the spring of 1978 gave Cheap Trick their first Top 10 smash. The song that catapulted the band to unprecedented heights of fame and fortune. The song that, as Nielsen puts it somewhat despairingly, Cheap Trick "will probably have to keep playing forever." In short, the song that changed everything.

In many ways, the saga of "I Want You to Want Me" is emblematic of the album as a whole - which is to say that it was wildly successful despite itself. For years Cheap Trick tried in vain to make the tune fly, finally retiring it for good (or so they thought) months before the Japan dates. "I have tapes of us doing the song in the bars back in 1976," Carlos says. "We'd introduce it as our hit record, even though we didn't have a deal, because we knew it would be big



someday. We tried to do it for the first album - that's the version on the box set [Sex, America, Cheap Trick] - but it wasn't what we were looking for, so we shelved it. *Sn In Color*, [producer Tom] Werman tried to gussy it up with this heavy-tank piano crap, but when it came out it still sounded empty. The label released it as a single, but they couldn't do anything with it. They took to it in Japan, though."



Know that "I Want You to Want Me" was a Japanese favorite, Cheap Trick, as a grateful nod to their fans in the Far East, felt obliged to temperately reinstate it to their live repertoire. "We thought the Japanese audiences would want to hear it," Ionder says, "so we just threw it back in the set at the last minute. It wound up

being probably the biggest song of our career." Indeed, the first time Cheap Trick performed the song in Japan, they got a lot more than they bargained for. "We know 'I Want You to Want Me' was a hit over there," Carlos says, "but we had no idea we'd get that 'Cryin'! Cryin'! Cryin'!' thing." The crowd not only mimicked the echo effect in the studio version's refrain ("Cryin'! Cryin'! Cryin'!"), they did so en masse and with stentorian enthusiasm. "The audience's screaming was absolutely deafening," Ionder remembers. "Sometimes the volume would drown us out . . . and we're a pretty loud band."



The volume started at the airport. Cheap Trick's arrival in Japan in 1978 has become something of a legend among the band's followers, and for good reason. As if trapped in a scene from some Asian remake of *A Hard Day's Night*, the band exited the plane only to be greeted by a phalanx of near-hysterical teenage girls. "The customs officials were flummoxed,"

Carlos chuckles. "They didn't expect for things to be quite that wild at the airport. Then it was a big race to the hotel." But things didn't hot up there, either. "Not only could we not go outside," Peterissen says, "we couldn't go





## Up With Cheap Trick

anywhere in the hotel, not even to the gift shop. They had to have guards on the fire escapes and elevators 24 hours a day; it was very unseemly. They said to us, "Just stay in your room, we'll do all the shopping for you. What do you want?" I was like, "Well, I don't know. What the hell is here?"

On Sire Legacy's newly re-mastered 20th anniversary set, *Cheap Trick at Budokan: The Complete Concert*, the fanaticism of these Japanese fans sounds closer than ever, their ear-splitting shrieks more palpable and more unreal. By restoring to the concert's nine previously excised tracks (as well as all of Inder and Nielsen's mood-enhancing between-song patter), and by resequencing the whole to match the set's true running order, *Budokan: The Complete Concert* offers listeners the full panoply of Cheap Trick at their live best.

The original *Budokan* album, however, was designed to please the typical Japanese fan, whose taste skewed decidedly pop. "We intentionally picked songs for the album that we knew the audience in Japan preferred," Inder says. "It worked well for us, but *Budokan* only showed one side of the band: the pop side." Not anymore. "Go Riddies" and "Auf Wiedersehen," in particular, bring to bear Cheap Trick's peculiar penchant for menace and madness, setting earth-rumbling rhythms against grinding-guitar bedlam; while free-wheeling favorites such as "High Roller" and "California Man" testify to the band's party-heavy intensity. "A lot of the songs were left off *Budokan* because they were deemed

too heavy," Nielsen insists. "In fact, I think we pulled some of the best material. But now, hearing it all together again, it's a much better record."

*Budokan: The Complete Concert* also redresses the historical inaccuracies and sonic limitations of *Budokan II*, a quickie sequel released without much ado in 1993. That album interpolated three songs recorded at *Budokan* a year after the fact, during the band's follow-up tour of 1979. For this deluxe reissue, the band mixed nine additional tracks from the *Budokan* concert to match the visceral impact of those on the original album, in effect recreating the total performance that won them worldwide acclaim 30 years ago.

In 1979, America and the rest of the world finally discovered what Japan already knew about Cheap Trick. But superstardom always comes with a price, and in Cheap Trick's case that price was called *Breem Police*. It - not *Budokan* - was supposed to be their fourth

album everywhere in the world, save Japan. Although it went platinum in the U.S. and peaked at #4 on *Billboard*, Cheap Trick wasted more for *Breem Police* - notably, a red-carpet roll-out for what they were certain was their best album yet. But when Epic in the U.S. decided to release the live album domestically, *Breem Police*, in the can and ready to go, was held back for almost a year.



"We had been playing the songs on our first three albums for a long time," Peterson says. "We were ready to move on to *Breem Police* when - boom - all of a sudden we had a kind of greatest-hits album out. We were like, 'Oh no, now we have to play those songs all over again!'" Nielsen elaborates: "Before *Budokan*'s success the critics liked us, now they were gunning for us. They thought that *Breem Police* was old material, but that wasn't true at all; it was just delayed material." But Linder is quick to point out that the *Budokan* breakthrough did have its advantages. "Initially, we were a little dismayed that *Breem Police* was put away," he explains. "But, obviously, if you keep hearing that you're selling so many units a week of your current album, it's worth putting off the next release for a while."

"The whole success of *Budokan* was serendipitous," Carlos waxes. "I look back on it now and laugh, because we never expected it in the first place. It was all gravy."

- Greg Siegel  
Managing Editor, *ICE Magazine*  
Los Angeles, CA February 1998





**1. Hello There (3:42)**

(G. Nelson/G. Nelson) © 1974

**2. Come On, Come On (3:59)**

(G. Nelson/G. Nelson) © 1974

**3. No Kiddies (3:57)**

(G. Nelson/G. Nelson) © 1974

**4. Speak Now Or  
Forever Hold Your Peace (5:00)**

(Came Music, BMI/Inquiry Music, BMI) All rights  
administered by Unchopped Music, Inc. (BMI/G. Nelson) © 1974

**5. Big Eyes (3:49)**

(G. Nelson) © 1974

**6. Lookout (3:12)**

(G. Nelson) © 1974

**7. Banned (4:39)**

(G. Nelson) © 1974

**8. Can't Hold On (4:13)**

(G. Nelson) © 1974

**9. Oh Caroline (3:59)**

(G. Nelson) © 1974

**10. Surrender (4:39)**

(G. Nelson) © 1974

**11. Auf Wiedersehen (4:39)**

(J. Hansman/G. Nelson) © 1974

**Surrender - Mac & PC Video**



**1. Need Your Love (3:54)**

(G. Nelson/J. Hansman) © 1974

**2. High Roller (4:38)**

(G. Linder/J. Hansman/G. Nelson) © 1974

**3. Southern Girls (3:53)**

(G. Nelson/J. Hansman) © 1974

**4. I Want You To Want Me (3:34)**

(G. Nelson) © 1974

**5. California Man (3:55)**

(G. Wood) © 1974

**6. Goodnight (3:58)**

(G. Nelson) © 1974

**7. Ain't That A Shame (3:52)**

(G. Boring/G. Hansman) © 1974

**8. Clock Strikes Ten (3:50)**

(G. Nelson) © 1974

**Auf Wiedersehen - Mac & PC Video**

