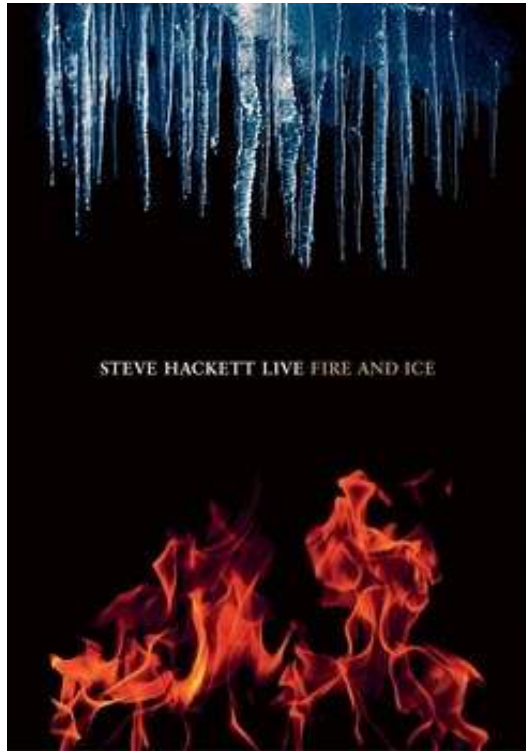


Guitarist Steve Hackett burns on new DVD

DVD | OCTOBER 2, 2012 | BY: PETER ROCHE |



Steve Hackett: Melts in your ears, not in your hands

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RATING FOR STEVE HACKETT LIVE: FIRE AND ICE DVD REVIEW



Okay, so it's not the most original title in rock history. But [Steve Hackett](http://www.examiner.com/topic/steve-hackett/articles) Live: Fire and Ice is an appropriate title for the latest concert [DVD](http://www.examiner.com/topic/dvd) from the former Genesis guitarist: The show was captured on a snowy November night in 2010 at Shepherd's Bush Empire. As the weather outside grew worse, Hackett and his ace band warmed things up inside with a parade of guitar and keyboard-based classics from his entire career. Five or six numbers hail from Hackett's then-new Out of the Tunnel's Mouth, but there's just as many nods to Genesis during the two-

plus hour-long show. Clad comfortably in black, Hackett thrills early on with "Valley of the Kings" (from Genesis Revisited) and "Every Day" (from Spectral Mornings). He sings a delicate refrain with co-guitarist

Amanda Lehmann on “Emerald and Ash,” then dazzles with “Golden Age of Steam.” Drummer Gary O’Toole handles Peter Gabriel’s vocals on “Watcher of the Skies” (from 1972’s Foxtrot) and sings “Carpet Crawlers” (from Lamb Lies Down on Broadway) while splashing his Sabians. Former Kajagoogoo bassist Nick Beggs lays a solid bottom end on his Rickenbacker. Dressed like a Charles Dickens villain (top hat and flowing black frock) Beggs anchors the arrangements with O’Toole while Hackett and saxophonist / flutist Rob Townsend weave intricate leads atop the mix. Beggs even gets a solo spot, “Darkness in Men’s Hearts,” where he uses both hands to simultaneously tap out the melody and rhythm on the instrument’s many (10-12) strings. “Ace of Wands” and “Shadow of the Hierophant” take viewers back to Hackett’s first solo effort, 1975’s Voyage of the Acolyte. The former tune features an exotic melody—equal parts Celtic and Indian—played in tandem by Hackett and Townsend (tin whistle). Porcupine Tree’s Steven Wilson joins the band on the latter, the spectacled musician activating his guitar pedals in bare feet. Hackett remains a master of his craft. The multiple cameras used for Fire and Ice catch the 60-year old bending strings and sliding between notes with his fingers, or occasion, using his thumbnail as a plectrum. He tugs on his Floyd Rose tremolo bar to create wild, siren-like wailing and deep growls. On “Tubehead” Hackett takes a violin bow to his strings, a la Jimmy Page, to achieve a droning locomotive effect. He prefaces “Blood on the Rooftops” with some strums and trills on a nylon-string Yairi classical guitar. We’re treated to lots of the hammer-on technique Hackett popularized before there was an Eddie Van Halen. His’s gold-top Gibson [Les Paul](http://www.examiner.com/topic/les-paul) (with custom features by Fernandes) offers a crackling signal, with which Hackett maps out thick riffs and searing leads. The man is renowned for his vibrato and sustain, and it’s likely some of the notes played here still haunt the Empire. Lehmann employs a red Ibanez guitar for rhythm duties, but the blonde harmonizes with Steve a couple times on main passages. Townsend mimics Hackett’s melody on flute for the quiet “Sleepers” as O’Toole tempers his thunder, thwacking his snare and toms with brushes instead of sticks. John Wetton (of Asia and King Crimson fame) joins the band on a cover of “All Along the Watchtower,” which isn’t too remarkable save Wetton’s vocal and Hackett’s bristling solos. It’s as if the Dylan song is almost too easy for an ensemble of this caliber. The musicians display their chops again on an early version of “Prairie Angel” (which would turn up on 2011’s Beyond the Shrouded Horizon). O’ Toole then unleashes a rapid-fire percussion solo (“Los Endos”) that segues nicely into Genesis fave “Firth of Fifth” (from 1973’s Selling England by the Pound). Hackett recently teamed with Yes bassist Chris Squire for the fittingly-named CD Squackett. In October, Wilson and Wetton top-line a list of special guests helping Hackett re-imagine the past on Genesis Revisited II. http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=xhtx_N7fjk8 (http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=xhtx_N7fjk8) www.hackettsongs.com (<http://www.hackettsongs.com>) <http://mvdb2b.com/s/SteveHackettFireIce/HS22003> (<http://mvdb2b.com/s/SteveHackettFireIce/HS22003>)



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