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Live At The Boston Esplanade is a well conceived and assembled DVD that brings the career of Marty Balin into the present, proving that he can still rise to the occasion after all these years.

Written by David Bowling

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Marty Balin's place in rock 'n' roll history is secure, having been a founding member, songwriter, and co-vocalist of the legendary Jefferson Airplane. Plus, anyone who could survive being the vocal partner of Grace Slick deserves his place in The Rock And Roll Hall Of Fame.

Martyn Jerel Buchwald began his music career in the early sixties as part of the west coast folk revival. His tenure in The Jefferson Airplane (1965-1971) and The Jefferson Starship (1975-1978) solidified his rock 'n' roll credentials and immortality. He also participated in the Airplane's 1989 reunion album and tour; and he continues to be a part-time member of Starship.

His solo career has now produced eight albums plus the hits "Hearts" and "Atlanta Lady."

2008 found him bringing his clear tenor voice to the Boston Esplanade as he performed a set of classic songs from different parts of his career. He is backed by vocalist Didi Stewart, drummer Donnie Baldwin, guitarist Mark Aguilar, keyboardist Gordon Gebert, and bass player David Trupia.

The set contains four Jefferson Airplane songs as "3/5th Of A Mile In 10 Seconds," "Somebody To Love," "White Rabbit," and "Volunteers" all find new life in the 21st century. Balin's voice is still powerful plus its tone is clear. It's actually easy to see how he held his own with Grace Slick.

Contrasted with his songs in the Airplane, his Starship and solo material is more pop oriented. "Miracles," "Count On Me," and "Runaway" were all huge hits for him and the Jefferson Starship in 1975 and 1978. And they present his smooth side as the listener is lulled and caressed by his vocal skills.

There are eight bonus tracks, seven of which are from various tours from 2006 to 2008 plus one odd track from 1995. The best of this material is his own "Summer Of Love," an excellent cover of Essra Mohawk's "Shaping The Night," and an interesting version of "Somebody To Love."

The second part of the bonus material is a series of interviews which includes one fifty minutes in length recorded for Visual radio.

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