



MUSIC DVD REVIEW: SUZANNE VEGA — 'LIVE: SOLITUDE STANDING'

Posted by: Jack Goodstein April 20, 2014
in Editor Pick: Music, Editor Picks, Folk, Music, Music DVD & Blu-ray Reviews, Music Genres, Reviews music, Top Stories

REVIEW OVERVIEW

Reviewer's Rating

Summary : It is a joy to hear and see Vega sing her hits.

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transcendent artists. Suzanne Vega is one of those. And the newly released DVD of her 2003 concert in Rome, Suzanne Vega Live: Solitude Standing, in which she revisits some of her masterpieces, simply reinforces her claim to membership in the songwriting pantheon.

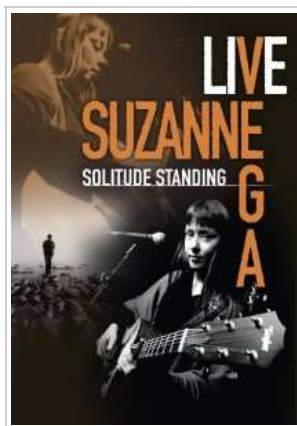
Over the years, the singer has lost little of the dramatically sincere intensity that characterizes her stage persona, and none of her crystalline vocal quality. It is a joy to hear and see her sing. The 17-track concert includes four poetic readings from Vega, who reportedly has been writing poetry since she was nine. Early efforts are available on the singer's [website](#).

But for many, although she makes a distinction between songwriting and poetry in an interview included as a bonus on the DVD, her songs are in fact poems. Songs, she tells her interviewer and translator Valerio Piccolo, need to be simpler. Complexity of language and idea need the written page. While one can certainly disagree with her assessment on aesthetic grounds, since she does acknowledge that the songs of someone like Dylan are poems, it is perhaps best to chalk her distinction up to artistic humility. If "Small Blue Thing" isn't a poem, I don't know what is. The same can be said for most of the other songs on the DVD, and a good many that didn't make the cut.

She begins with "Marlene on the Wall" and ends with "Tom's Diner." In between she works her way through "When Heroes Go Down," "Gypsy," "Left of Center," "The Queen and the Soldier," and of course "Luka." Fans who want to hear her hits will not be disappointed. Although, I must admit I don't particularly care for relegating "Undertow" to run over the closing credits. Still, that's better than omitting it entirely.

She does keep between-song patter to an acceptable minimum, although impatience makes Piccolo's translations of her remarks for the Italian audience sometime seem a good deal longer than what she said. Joining Vega and Piccolo on stage is bassist Mike Visceglia.

The staging, spotlighting the singer's face and hands on a shadowy darkened stage, is dramatically effective. It sets the absolute right tone for an excellent concert experience. A concert photo album is also



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