

DVD review: SUZANNE VEGA – Solitude Standing

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Timed for release to coincide with Vega's new studio album *Tales From The Realm Of The Queen Of Pentacles* (presumably to freeload on the coat-tails of that album's publicity) this DVD finds Suzanne Vega performing at the Rome Auditorium in the summer of 2003.

At that time Vega was touring her *Retrospective: The Best Of* set and promoting her book *The Passionate Eye* – a collection of song lyrics, poems, essays, and personal anecdotes, and this DVD captures 1 hour (recorded/edited for TV?). The 'classics' 'Tom's Diner', 'Luka' and 'Marlene On The Wall' are present with another 10 numbers culled from her back catalogue, with the majority featuring on her 'best of' album.

That would be fine – short, but sweet – with Vega performing backed only by bassist Mike Visceglia, but the set is broken up by poetry readings – again, OK but they are then interpreted for the audience by Italian singer songwriter Valerio Piccolo. As is some of Vega's audience 'patter'.

Perched on stage to Vega's right throughout the set, Piccolo is a spare part for the most part and when he does interpret – the poems, or Vega's between numbers banter – it breaks up the natural 'flow'. Novel, perhaps, but only diehard Vega fans are going to want to watch this more than once. ***

Review by Pete Whalley



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