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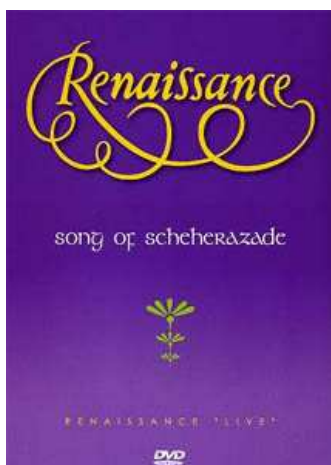


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Renaissance

Song of Scheherazade

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Renaissance is one of the best kept secrets in music. Since the seventies they have created an interesting and unique blend of rock, folk, and poetry based around medieval fanfare and culture. The band recorded nine albums between the early seventies and the early eighties and vocalist Annie Haslam has been a worldwide cult phenomenon ever since. Song of Scheherazade features footage of the band's performance in its classic incarnation. Many will undoubtedly remember the Stephanie Adlington fronted version from years later (which may have just been recording projects and not have included live performances) and the great travesty in this set is that it is not career spanning.

I believe that this footage is essential to understanding how popular this band was in their heyday. While they may never have scored a major pop hit, they were tremendously influential in the development of the progressive music movement. This footage serves as a fitting reminder of that fact. Most of it is decent quality, though none of it is pristine, but just seeing how mesmerizing Annie Haslam is in person is worth the price of admission. If you love progressive music and have yet to discover Renaissance then this is a solid place to start. Its superior to the album's simply because seeing is believing when it comes to this band. Haslam is not done justice on the albums, although she is enjoyable on them for the most part.

The target market here is obviously longtime fans and every one of them should own this. New material from this band is a rarity so take some time to seek this one out. Fans of Yes, ELP, and Blackmore's Night should also check this DVD out!

Reviewed by Mark Fisher

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