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Classic rock legend RICK WAKEMAN celebrates the hymns with 'Amazing Grace'
(June 2007)

MVD Visual by exclusive arrangement with Studio T is pleased to announce the release of *Rick Wakeman: Amazing Grace* for North American distribution. A timeless collection of beautiful, inspiring, instrumental arrangements of traditional hymns, *Amazing Grace* features variations on some of the most popular melodies and themes ever produced. The DVD & CD package has been arranged and performed by music legend and TV/Radio personality Rick Wakeman, and reveals another side to one of music's most gifted and revered personalities. This is a stunning and emotive selection of internationally celebrated Christian hymns.

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Also included on both the CD and DVD is a bonus vocal track of "Amazing Grace," arranged and performed by Wakeman, featuring the vocals of daughter Jemma Wakeman (aged 24) and the English Chamber Choir.

Rick Wakeman's name is synonymous with the music which shaped a generation. During the late 60s and early 70s, he established himself as a well respected and hard working

session musician, collaborating with artists as diverse as Black Sabbath, Cat Stevens, Elton John, David Bowie and Lou Reed. Wakeman is probably best known in the music world for his string of multi-million selling hit solo albums and as a member of the folk-band The Strawbs and Progressive-Rock legends Yes.

The DVD features live studio performances of Wakeman on the Grand Piano, crafted with motion pictures, high-end graphics and emotive imagery to bring to life stunning visual interpretations shaped from a collection of material that many will be familiar with, whether from a religious background or not. His unique arrangements of "All Things Bright and Beautiful," "Amazing Grace," "Jerusalem," "Ode To Joy" and "Abide With Me" are just some of the hymns featured, which have served both historic and important roles in worldwide Christian communities, and in fact all walks of life.

Throughout the soundtrack, Wakeman weaves subtle intricacies, creating masterful variations upon the original themes by introducing new chord structures and new harmonies that complement the originals without deviating from the desired spiritual path.

A devoted Christian, Rick Wakeman expresses his love for hymns (yet,

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admittedly, not all of them): "I just love what they stand for and the fantastic role that they play in our worship. I also consider the hymn to be an important part of outreach, especially at Easter and Christmas. Not only do some have lyrical and meaningful words that help us all with our worship and understanding, but the melodies are some of the most beautiful ever written".

Also included is a new arrangement of "Morning Has Broken," which Wakeman originally recorded with Cat Stevens in 1971, and went on to be a Top 10 hit.

This *Amazing Grace* package also highlights the cherished title tune, originally penned by John Newton in the 1770's. The hymn is subject to somewhat of a commemoration this year to mark the 200th Anniversary of the 'Abolition of Slavery' and its roots are firmly linked to the events that led to an abolishment of the slave trade within the British Empire in 1807. 'Amazing Grace', like many of the pieces featured on the soundtrack have proved to produce an unprecedented impact on our society and it continues.



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