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Soft Machine Legacy New Morning: the Paris Concert (Inakustic)

Reunion concert from last year by a pack of aging Brit jazzbos falls a bit short of providing definitive live evidence of Soft Machine's recorded brilliance from the early '70s. Competent musicianship and noodling jams probably won't convince newcomers to venture in for a closer look, and longtime band devotees, while likely delighted to see bassist Hugh Hopper, guitarist John Etheridge, drummer John Marshall and late sax man Elton Dean serving up some tasty interplay, might feel slighted on the psychedelic end of the equation by the lack of founding member Kevin Ayers' endearing, oddball songwriting compositions. Not a complete bore, but decidedly lacking in eccentricity—a bit wanky and aimless. (John Chandler)