



MARILLION - SOMEWHERE ELSE

Marillion is one of those bands that never really gets the credit they deserve. Originally riding the resurgent wave of the progressive rock movement in the early 80's with their flamboyant front man Fish, the band eventually shifted to a much more melodic, intelligent rock sound over the last 20 years, led by current singer/songwriter Steve Hogarth.

It has been three years since the release of the critically acclaimed, 2-disc concept album *Marbles*, with the band's much anticipated follow up producing *Somewhere Else*, which features more of a structured and less emotional, pristine pop sound.

Produced and mixed by Mike Hunter, Hogarth and company strip it down and rely even more on melody and a more quaint vocal style. Whereas usually creating more of a dense, layered sound, *Somewhere Else* presents a

less-cluttered, rhythmic-driven direction. Keyboards are much less

prevalent, which opens up space for bassist Mark Trewavas and drummer Ian Mosley to really lay it down and put forth stellar performances.

Many of the song's themes revolve around the circumstances of Hogarth's marital breakup, as the singer really opens up (lyrically and vocally) his heart of emotions.

This clearly shows through on tracks like "The Wound", ("I've done everything that can be done to heal this wound.") "Somewhere Else", ("Everyone I love lives somewhere else.") and "The Other Half" ("I won't lie to you or hurt you. I'm not like that anymore.").

Instrumentally the band continues to excel, reinventing themselves yet again with more of a traditional pop sensibility, rather than continually exploring the lavish, indulging soundscapes of previous efforts.

The rhythm section of Trewavas' punctuating bass lines and Mosley's drumming flourishes are fantastic on tracks such as "The Other Half", "See It Like A Baby" and "The Wound", while the trademark soaring guitar leads of Steve Rothery are everpresent on "See It Like A Baby", "Somewhere Else" and "A Voice From The Past". Also of note is Rothery's delicate acoustic guitar work on the closing ballad "Faith".

Although an intricate part of Marillion's progressive, atmospheric concepts through the years, keyboard wizard Mark Kelly seems to step back a bit yet still, his colorful accents of piano and synth embellish tracks such as "See It Like A Baby", "Voice From The Past" and "Faith".

Marillion certainly takes a different approach this time around, which is truly saying something for a band releasing their 14th studio effort.

And although it doesn't stand up against Marillion classics such as Brave, Season's End or even Marbles, Somewhere Else does deliver enough quality moments to make this an enjoyable listen. A listen that will even grow on you, if your patient.

- Joe Milliken