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MARILLION**Somewhere Else**

2007

Studio Album

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Review by **E-Dub** (Eric)

Posted 12:01:27 AM EST, 4/10/2007

★★★★☆ Fugazi. Clutching At Straws. Afraid Of Sunlight. Now, Somewhere Else. What these discs have in common is they were given the unenviable task of following up what is considered classics and/ masterpieces. Fans may have thought Marillion were on the decline until they experienced new life with Anoraknophobia, and the now instant classic Marbles. Although Somewhere Else may be somewhere in the middle of the road when Marillion's body of work is reviewed years from now, it will be considered a strong entry for the group.

I have to say that I was a bit skeptical before I received my copy due to a lackluster review on DPRP; however, any skepticism was washed away inside of 10 seconds of the first track entitled "The Other Half". Whereas Marbles started off with the slow pulse of "The Invisible Man", Marillion charges out of the gate with the signature drum pattern of Mosley. Punctuated with a razor sharp solo from Rothers, it's the perfect choice to lead off Somewhere Else.

"See It Like A Baby" is the albums first single and has a bit more of the classic Marillion characteristics over Marbles first single "You're Gone". Instead of drum loops we have a jazzy guitar/drum combo and Trewavas' steady bass during the verses before a speeding jet goes flashing by...but it's not a jet but Rothery's guitar bridging the verse and adding a nice touch to the chorus. Rothers especially shines on this track as the solo could be one of his finest on the album.

Next is the very Beatle-esque "Thankyou Whoever You Are". Not exactly a favorite of mine as the lyrics seem a bit forced and sluggish. Mosley's drumming isn't very inventive on this tune either as some of it is reminiscent of "The



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Invisible Man". Not a bad tune, but just doesn't stick out.

If the previous track sounded lazy, "Most Toys" gives it a roundhouse kick to the adam's apple and proceeds to give us an all out assault. It reminds me a lot of Radiation's "The Answering Machine" because it's short, but not very sweet...and I mean that in a positive sends. Trewavas and Mosley really anchor this monster as h jumps up on his soapbox (which he does quite frequently on Somewhere Else). In all honesty, I like this song more than I thought I would.

One thing is crystal clear, and that is h is making a statement on the condition of the world today; however, as outspoken as he is about current events, he's not afraid to expose his vulnerabilities. The title track "Somewhere Else" is a song written during the breakup of his marriage-very emotive lyrics that shows h's very human side and pain. As tender as the song his, Rothers' grungy guitar really fits the mood as it's almost David Gilmour-ish. One of the albums highlights and harkens back to the pain of something off "Afraid Of Sunlight".

A big surprise for me is "A Voice From The Past". I wonder if it's leftover from the Marbles sessions as it would fit in nicely. Mark Kelly's hypnotic piano sort of reminds me of the keys prior to the 'blue pain' section of "This Strange Engine", and the song has another excellent solo from Rothery. Not a very long solo, but he packs a huge statement in a short amount of time. Another favorite of mine from this disc.

"No Such Thing" concerned me after reading the reviews on DPRP's website; however, I actually like the song with it's space out, distorted vocals. Much like a lot of the album, this song is another socially and politically conscious thought of h's set to music. I'm not a huge fan of mixing politics and music, but alongside Rothery's eerie guitar and the moodiness of Mosley's drums, it's still a worthy addition to the album.

No spaciness or subtleties for "The Wound". Classic Mosley drum fill with Kelly's piano accompanying it, the band literally explodes is an absolute fury. This song is a perfect example of what Marillion are capable of when they put their heads down and give an all out assault on the senses. This or "The Other Half" would be perfect show openers on the new tour.

The momentum is somewhat lost when "The Last Century For Man" slides in. Not bad, but not a favorite of mine as it's sort of sluggish in feel as h plays Nostradamus and predicts that we're in our last century. Maybe he's right, but I wish the song made more of a statement.

With Marbles, I'm always floored with the majestic "Neverland" as the albums closer. We don't have that on Somewhere Else, but "Faith" still works very well as a closer. A song that's been in the bag for a while, I'm pretty familiar with it and I may have even touched upon it in my review of the Before First Light DVD.

To summarize, I don't know if this will be mentioned alongside the other Marillion classics when all is said and done with. What this band has given us, however, is solid music that is still relevant in today's music world. There's not as much progressive elements in their recent material as there was for the first half of their career, but I do hear flashes every now and then. Also, I don't want to hear how Rothery is missing from Marillion's current music because he's

blistering your ears throughout Somewhere Else. As for the disc, I probably should've waited for a few more listens before writing a review as my view changes somewhat over the course of time. My initial thoughts are that Marillion are still capable of raising the bar and meeting the next challenge. I think they've done a fine job with Somewhere Else.

A strong 3.75 to 4 stars out of 5

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