MARILLION Somewhere Else review by Tristan Mulders(Tristan)

2007

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MARILLION

Somewhere Else

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Review by <u>Tristan Mulders</u> (Tristan) [Prog Reviewer] Posted 3:22:34 PM EST, 4/7/2007

Marillion - Somewhere Else

It took nearly 3 years for this British rock group to come up with a follow-up to their critically acclaimed "Marbles" album and let me put it like this: I won't mind aging another 3 years if that means I'll get my hand on yet another excellent Marillion album! Today I finally received my hard copy of this small jewel by post, accompanied by the promo single to the song **See it like a Baby**, and this meant a series of events was put into action:

First of all I made sure everyone at home knew I was not to be disturbed for the next hour or so and that serious repercussions would follow if someone still had the nerve to do so! Next, I needed to lock myself in my room and put this disc in my CD-player, thirdly I began to scavenge under the immense pile of rubbish on my desk to find my pretty decent headset, and finally I lay down on my bed with the sun shining directly in my face, put the headphones on and let the music work its magic on me...

Now, this is the first listening of this album for me, at least... when it comes down to a decent quality version of the music. For I already heard the whole album at an exclusive listening party in Amsterdam this February. And let me tell you, even on the crappy installation they had at the listening party (probably done on purpose so nobody would even consider attempting to tape the stuff), most of the new album impressed me first time round!



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Maybe the most surprising element of this album is its production; producer Mike Hunter seems to have managed to give the band a fresh and modern sound, which is quite the opposite of the dark and warm sound that Dave Meegan achieved on "Marbles". Not that I dislike Meegan's work on "Marbles"; this new sound is just so... well... different... and I like it! People have compared it to the 'live' sound of the band and it sounds indeed far more dynamic than any of the other recordings. What's rather curious is that each time I listen to "Somewhere Else" I cannot help but think that perhaps if Mike Hunter produced Marillion's 1998 album "Radiation", that album would have been more successful... For the songs on this album have the sound I always imagined that the band would have loved for the songs on "Radiation". The songs included here have this really psychedelic yet modern feel to them.

It took me a while to fully enjoy those songs though, but there were two instant faves: the title track **Somewhere Else** and the atmospheric **No such Thing**. The first is an instant new era Marillion classic, combining elements of the epic *Ocean Cloud* and the airy *Neverland* tracks, but dipped in a sauce of *This is the 21st Century*'s electronics, whereas the latter instantly made me think of the Black Sabbath song "Planet Caravan", mainly because of the effect that's used on the vocals.

After what seems like an infinite amount of listens to a leaked promotional version of the album (yeah, I know what a bad thing to do... but I already ordered the album by then), gradually the other songs began to grow on me, which seems to be a tendency that's continued over each Marillion disc. But it wasn't until this very afternoon that I fully comprehended the sheer beauty of this disc. Each and every song is not what they at first might appear to be. They aren't lengthy... they aren't overly complex... yet they aren't exactly radio friendly either... Yet on first listen it might appear that Marillion have gone in a more or less modern rock direction with "Somewhere Else", but in a while the listener will discover that this is just trademark Marillion with all those classic elements, but just for the first time in their career they've fully progressed into the 21st Century...

Excellent guitar rock, the occasional subtle drum computer, the nice string arrangements in the backgrounds, and the lovely live sound of the instruments ... suddenly all the pieces come together and the puzzle's complete: this is Marillion's sound for the future!

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