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## THE PHANTOM TOLLBOOTH

Your Gateway to Music and More from a Christian Perspective  
Slow down as you approach the gate, and have your change ready....

Somewhere Else

Artist: Marillion

Label: MVDaudio

Length: 10 tracks/52:07

The band:

Steve (h) Hogarth - Vocals

Steve Rothery - Guitar

Mark Kelly - Keyboards

Pete Trewavas - Bass

Ian Mosley - Drums

The music of this five-piece band from Aylesbury, England is often about intangibles, epiphanies and revelations found amongst the drudgery of living everyday life. Each song is like a city seen at night, all sparkling light and shadows around every corner. It's light and mystery, truth and consequences, possibilities and uncertainties.

Measured out in equal

parts guitar and keyboards, shrouded in vocals and tempered with the steady and adventurous rhythm section of bass and drums. Marillion is a band like not many others. 'Cause at the center of what they do and have always done is a big, beating heart exploring the mysteries of human existence. It's music meant to be felt, not merely heard.

The album *Somewhere Else* is Marillion's fourteenth album. It covers many topics that are very relevant in this day and age. Topics like keeping your sense of wonder in a consumerist world ('See it Like a Baby'), reflection over the whole rock star trip ('Somewhere Else'), taking inspiration from and remembering people from the past ('A Voice from the Past'), investing too much in material goods ('Most Toys'), a response to the rape of the Earth ('The Last Century for Man') and what helps us all get through it ('Faith').

The song 'Faith' is a highlight. Here are some lyrics from Steve Hogarth:

*What I have here in my hand  
is knowledge without proof  
What I have here in my hand  
This is what I feel for you*

*It's why the Earth is alive  
It makes electricity work  
And fire dance in the sky.*

My only two real critical points I have of this album is although the sentiment of 'Most Toys' is appropriate to these times and meaningful..."he who dies with the most toys is still dead"...I think the song, which clocks in at under three minutes, would be better suited as a b-side because I think it is a bit too loud and obnoxious when compared to the rest of

the album and I think it also interferes with the flow of the album. Generally I like it when the band rocks like they do in this song, but this song is not the best example of this side of the band. I applaud them for mixing it up though like this. My second critical point is in regards to the production. Although I think producer Michael Hunter does a commendable job with the knob twisting, I wish the band would invest in a deeper, richer sound that can bring out the nuances of their music better. The rich production sound of the latest Rush album *Snakes & Arrows* is what I have in mind. Marillion's music, I think, could really benefit from a deeper, richer production and I think it deserves it!

Marillion has a history of high quality four and five star albums in their arsenal, namely *Misplaced Childhood*, *Clutching At Straws*, *Seasons End*, *Brave*, *Afraid of Sunlight*, and the sprawling 2 CD effort *Marbles*. *Somewhere Else* feels like a direct response to the *Marbles* album and it's more trimmed down, less layered and more direct. Because of this

result, *Somewhere Else* seems at first take, like it's possibly Marillion's most slight album. But like all their albums, multiple listens are required to unveil all that's on offer. Highlights include 'The Other Half' which seems to be about the cycle of death and birth. Steve Rothery's end guitar solo on this track is sensational. The first 'single' off the album, 'See It Like a Baby' is also a highlight along with the title track, 'A Voice from the Past,' 'The Wound' and 'Faith,' In my opinion, Marillion doesn't have any albums that rank under three out of five stars or in this case, tocks.



I rank *Somewhere Else* a solid .

<http://www.marillion.com>

Chris Barlow  
June 18th, 2007

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