



(six newspapers across Midcoast Maine)

Marillion: Somewhere in London (MVD Visual, 2 DVDs, 223 min.).

The somewhere is the June 15 and 16, 2007 shows at the London Forum, concluding the band's "Somewhere Else" tour. In the 105-minute main concert (disc one) the band performs seven of the 10 songs on "Somewhere Else" and three from 2004's "Marbles" in the 15-song set.

Marillion was formed in 1979 in Aylesbury, Buckinghamshire, England. For its first four albums, behind the leadership of singer Fish, it was very much a progressive band in the same vein of Genesis. The band's name came from J.R.R. Tolkien's "The Silmarillion," but was shortened in 1981 to avoid copyright complications. Then Fish left in 1988 and Steve Hogarth became the vocalist in 1989. The lineup has been steady since then, as the core of bassist Pete Trewavas, guitarist Steve Rothery (from the pre-Fish days), keyboardist Mark Kelly and drummer Ian Mosley have been together since 1984. The band's sound is pop-rock with progressive, and even jazz, touches. The songs often rock, then drop into a softer, more exploratory bit for either a short or lengthy span, as on "The Other Half."

Live, the band is topnotch, as shown here right from the opening "Splintering Heart," which begins with just Hogarth and a couple of flash explosions for three minutes, before the rest of the band joins in. It is the first of several songs with very cool guitar playing by Rothery. The ballad "You're Gone" starts softly but rises to full-blown, with very melodic guitar. Throughout the strong "No Such Thing," Hogarth's vocal is electronically altered and, later, he uses a megaphone while singing "Somewhere Else." The latter is a bit Beatlesque on the nursery rhyme parts, but really rocks during its later stages. Hogarth plays pink guitar during it. Earlier on "Faith," another song from the then-new album, Hogarth plays bass ("I only know three notes," he says, and then needs help getting started) and bassist Trewavas plays acoustic guitar. The main concert also includes fan favorites "King" and "Man of a Thousand Faces."

The second DVD includes seven more live performances from an April 1, 2007 show at The Rocket Club in Buckinghamshire, including favorites "Afraid of Sunlight," "Beautiful" and "Sugar Mice." There are also five performances caught during a Rocket Club rehearsal (which was attended by fans who won a contest) and 5.1 remixes of four songs from "Somewhere Else." **Grade: A**

By Tom Von Malder