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Music DVD Review: Steve Hogarth - *H - Naked in the Chapel*

For those who are not already in the know, [Steve Hogarth](#) -- or "H" as he is known to hardcore fans -- is the lead vocalist for British progressive rock band Marillion.

Faced with the rather daunting task of taking over the reins from Marillion's original vocalist -- the highly theatrical Fish -- Hogarth not only rose to it, but actually helped reinvent Marillion in the process. With his far more personally engaging style, Hogarth in fact took Marillion from their one-time status as a sort of baby Peter Gabriel-era Genesis knockoff to a band who has long since re-established a unique identity for themselves with latter day progressive-pop masterpieces like *Marbles*.

The bottom line is that Marillion now enjoys a smaller, but more devoted fan base than they ever did in the Fish days. And those same fans absolutely love them their boy "H".

Which is why a concert DVD like *H - Naked in the Chapel* presents the sort of problem many a lesser band would actually love to have. For those faithful hardcore Marillion fans, it offers a rare and intimate audience -- think VH1's *Storytellers* series for the best point of reference here -- with the Marillion frontman.

It is, in fact, billed as an "intimate evening of music, rock n' roll diaries, lyrics and conversation" with one and the same. On the other hand, for those living outside of that particular universe, *H - Naked in the Chapel* could well leave you scratching your heads.

Not that "H" isn't an instantly engaging and likable performer. He is.

But in this particular setting, where "H" is captured performing alone on an acoustic piano in a London church chapel, even he has to make some concessions. At one point, "H" even acknowledges Marillion's past with Fish by saying "feel free to ask for "Kayleigh" (Marillion's biggest hit single with Fish) if you want to." At another point, he admits that this was "an experiment to see if I could get people to pay money to be in a room with me," which is perhaps the more telling point here.

That said, for Marillion fans, and especially for those of the latter-day model, this is pure gold to the point of almost being a sort of love letter. Seated behind his piano in the chapel, Hogarth tells several very amusing and often personal stories in between playing an informal, but well-paced set of songs from both Marillion, himself, and those of other artists.

The covers are particularly cool, and include David Bowie's "Life On Mars," Paul McCartney's "Maybe I'm Amazed," Leonard Cohen's "Famous Blue Raincoat," Tom Robinson's "War Baby," and Elvis Presley's "In The Ghetto" (which appears to come by request).

But for those hardcore Marillion fans (and let's be honest here, and say this DVD is who this is really for), seeing Hogarth's solo take on such an absolutely gorgeous song as "Fantastic Place" is worth the price of admission itself.

That said, this one is mostly for those who are already Marillion fans -- but they will love it.

H - Naked in the Chapel will be in stores on May 19.