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## Life On Mars – Series One (2006/British TV/Acorn DVD) + 'h' (aka Steve Hogarth): One Love - Naked In The Chapel (MVD Concert DVD)

Picture: C+    Sound: C+  
Extras: C+/C  
Episodes/Concert: C+

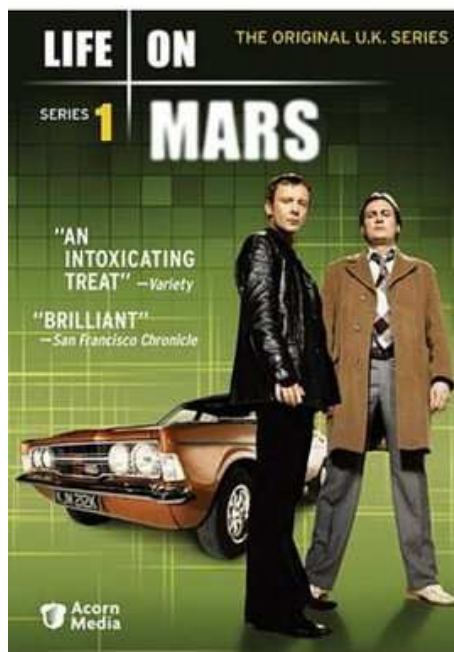
Sometimes an idea (or high concept) leads to a hit show and **Life On Mars** is one of them.

While the fate of the U.S. version is uncertain, this original British version is a hit and now, **Series 1** arrives on DVD with extras and at least it is an idea that breaks up the monotony of the overly scientific and technical police procedurals that are being made on both sides of the Atlantic too often.

A technical detective (John Simm) is an expert at solving the latest cases and makes excellent use of the latest techno-tools, but when he is hit by a speeding car, he does not die. He is not severely injured. The impact does not cause brain damage, but it does cause him to wake up in a parallel universe in 1973!

Suddenly a part of police detective's past, he finds out his old unit was very tough, gumshoe, unscientific and even backwards in its violence, hard drinking and this set has all eight hour-long shows on four DVDs. The idea is good, but instead of really delving into the possibilities, the show take the high concept, commercial comedy road that is safer and in the long term, that does not help the show in the long run.

For those in the know, the title is also the name of a song by the band Marillion, which is featured as soon as (in tired MTV style) Simm's Sam Tyler wakes up in 1973, but the band is still around and its lead singer Steve Hogarth (aka 'h', not a drug reference as much as we can tell) just happens to have a new concert DVD of a recent (Sept. 2007) solo concert now on



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DVD. **One Love - Naked In The Chapel** is a surprisingly good show and shows Hogarth has some showmanship. The main concert has 18 songs, including an ill-advised cover of *Maybe I'm Amazed*. An interesting curio, you might want to see it and he can sing.

The anamorphically enhanced 1.78 X 1 image on the series was shot in Super 16mm film and helps it look good, but the final, transfer here also looks soft and other minor stylizings that work against the image, while the concert is an obvious 1080i HD shoot with more detail issues. The Dolby Digital 5.1 and 2.0 Stereo on the show is good, while the same on the concert is can be weak, both with a lack of soundstage and more is expected of the sound there. The difference is narrow, but there. Extras on the TV show include outtakes, audio commentaries on every episode and three making of featurettes. The concert has four bonus sections.

- Nicholas Sheffo

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