

MAYHEM

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Marillion name the new man



■ MARILLION HAVE finally settled on the man who'll replace Fish as their new vocalist. He is Steve Hogarth (pictured inset below and far right above), the ex-singer and keyboard player with former A&M band the Europeans, and CBS band the Last Call.

Marillion are already rehearsing songs for a new album, provisionally entitled 'Season's End', at Music Farm studios near Brighton, and they'll begin recording in April.

The band have already written "an album-and-a-half's-worth" of new material, and among the tracks set for inclusion are: 'Season's End', a widescope eight-minute song reminiscent of the band's earlier work; 'King Of Sunset Town', a prospective first single; 'Holloway Girls'; 'Easter' and 'Berlin', both typical slowburning Marillion epics; 'Hooks In You', described by guitarist Steve Rothery as, "A tongue in cheek Heavy Metal song, that should get the crowd bouncing"; and 'After Me'.

The album will be produced by the band and Nick Davis, who engineered 'Clutching At Straws' and 'Thieving Magpie'.

Current plans call for recording to be completed by July, with a single (almost definitely 'King Of Sunset Town') released in August, followed by the album in September.

Marillion will then tour in America, in the main to enable Hogarth to blend with the band live, before playing their traditional Christmas UK dates.

Myself and lensman Ray Palmer were invited down to Music Farm to catch a preview of some of the new material.

So with the band, 20 tons of gear and us crammed into a small rehearsal room, Marillion ran through 'Holloway Girls', 'Season's End' and 'Kings Of Sunset Town'. Hogarth's vocals are strong and emotional, and with the material possessing a more melodic edge but still bearing all of the Marillion hallmarks, the set was, even at this early stage, tight and highly impressive.

"We're all very pleased with the way things have worked out," confirmed keyboard player Mark Kelly after the impromptu show. "Steve clicked with the band immediately he first rehearsed with us, and it's been getting

better and better. We can't wait to get the album out, and get on the road."

So how did Steve come to join?

"He was recommended to us by his publishers," says Kelly. "We really liked the tapes they gave us, and as soon as we began playing together it felt like it could really happen."

But how does Steve Hogarth feel about the awesome task of following Fish?

"I wouldn't even attempt to, it would be foolish," he says. "For one thing, I'm five-foot-seven,

and nine-and-a-half stone wringing wet!

"But seriously, Fish was a unique personality, and I wouldn't attempt to emulate him. I'll just be myself. I feel that the band are very strong and vibrant, and that the fans will feel the strength and commitment in the music. I'm sure it will work out."

The band have also been collaborating with lyricist John Helmer on some of the new material.

"We've taken some of his ideas, and developed them with some of ours," says Kelly. "Obviously Fish is such a brilliant lyricist that we won't try to copy his style, just get together some interesting ideas in the songs."

"I love Fish's lyrics," says Hogarth, "and I'll certainly look forward to singing some of the old material. Although a lot of it is very personal to Fish, I think people identify strongly with the words. I'll just feel the emotion and try to portray it, and hope that everyone enjoys them."

But Marillion's best answer to your questions will come with the release of the album, and their live shows. It works. Don't miss them.

JON HOTTEN



Pix Ray Palmer