

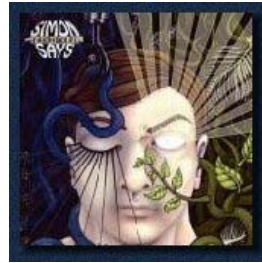
**Band:** Simon Says  
**CD Title:** "Tardigrade"

**Band Website:** [www.gepr.net/simon.html](http://www.gepr.net/simon.html)

**Label:** Galileo/ProgRock Records

**Label Website:** [www.progrockrecords.com](http://www.progrockrecords.com)

**Release Date:** 2008



It's been six years since the last **Simon Says** release back in 2002 and from what I can hear the band has only gone from strength to strength. With their new release, their third entitled **Tardigrade** the band has delivered ten new symphonic prog compositions of the highest quality. The band's current line-up consists of Daniel Feldt (vocals), Jonas Hallberg (guitars, percussion), Mattias Jarlhed (drums, backing vocals), Stefan Renstrom (bass, keyboards) and Magnus Paulsson (keyboards). On this release, the band continue their epic tale of Simon, only on this disc he is reborn as Tardigrade.

**The music of Simon Says**

is classic symphonic prog, replete with huge swells of Mellotron choirs, soaring keyboard and guitar solos mixed with soft and delicate acoustic guitars and piano. If I said nothing more you would get the picture but more needs to be said. The musicianship on **Tardigrade** is very accomplished with the overall tone and symphonic style being reminiscent of bands such as Yes circa Relayer and Genesis circa Wind and Wuthering. The opening track "Suddenly the Rain" (14:48) features all the right elements including a rousing melody that recurs throughout the piece with the song's title sung in refrain. Following the first track's grand finish the band launch into the rocking, off-kilter title track "Tardigrade" (3:44) with incorporates some tasty Hammond sounds within a complex rhythm structure that wouldn't sound out of place on a Gentle Giant recording. We're then treated some pleasant acoustic guitar and vocals backed by some beautiful Mellotron strings on "The Chosen One" (5:45) before the song morphs into a more up-tempo feel. Other tracks such as the lush Mellotron filled "As the River Runs" (10:35) feature a host of familiar musical motifs that are sure to satisfy fans of this genre. The track "Circles End" (6:21) puts the focus again on the acoustic guitar, and Mellotron choirs and flute. As if that wasn't enough **Simon Says** ends the disc with the epic "Brother Where You Bound" (26:48) made up of multiple segments that incorporate everything from prog to jazz to spacey atmospherics ending with a multiple crescendos.

**The music of Simon Says**

will easily appeal to fans of bands such as IQ or Spock's Beard or anyone into classic symphonic progressive rock. The music on **Tardigrade** mixes heavily orchestrated symphonic moments with quirky counterpoint, blending the electric with the acoustic, shifting the music's tempo up and down to suit the story telling. As on their previous outing the music is at once familiar and yet somehow new and fresh. This is a no-brainer must-add to the CD collection and easily of my favorites so far in 2008.