Joe Satriani – Super Collossal (2006)

1 Super Colossal 4:14 2 Just Like Lightnin' 4:01 3 It's So Good 4:14 4 Redshift Riders 4:50 5 Ten Words 3:28 6 A Cool New Way 6:13 7 One Robot's Dream 6:16 8 The Meaning Of Love 4:34 9 Made Of Tears 5:32 10 Theme For A Strange World 4:39 11 Movin' On 4:05 12 A Love Eternal 3:33 13 Crowd Chant 3:14 Drums – Simon Phillips (tracks: 6 to 9) Drums, Percussion – Jeff Campitelli (tracks: 1 to 5, 10 to 13) Electronics [Sound Design] – Eric Caudieux Guitar, Bass, Keyboards, Producer, Recorded By, Songwriter – Joe Satriani

The most frightening thing about "Super Colossal" is that it starts off sounding horrifically similar to the chorus of Billy Squier's "The Stroke." Thankfully, this is remedied immediately, and Satch returns to familiar territory. The sound of the title track is big and booming, but the tone and delivery are instantly recognizable. Satriani doesn't pull any new tricks out of his bag, but lets his fingers do the talking throughout most of the record. And, of course, it wouldn't be a Satriani record without a few midtempo numbers thrown in for good measure, and "It's So Good" certainly delivers a swaggering punch that is reminiscent of not only Flying in a Blue Dream but moments of protégé Steve Vai's epic album Passion and Warfare. There are moments of delicate frailty and instrumentals with a romantic and optimistic feeling, tempering the high-energy blues-driven guitar shredders and leaving Super Colossal with a nice sense of balance -- except for the album's finish. "Crowd Chant" is arguably one of the weirdest moments in a career full of eccentricity, but it's painfully out of place. However, with its catchy melody and call-and-response verses, it's going to make one heck of a concert singalong. On the whole, Satriani really doesn't push boundaries or stretch his guitar vocabulary too much here, but even on his worst day his productions could best any other shredder du jour based simply on the fact that he crafts songs rather than insipid guitar-scale exercises to flaunt and flail around carelessly. ---Rob Theakston, AllMusic Review

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