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War of the Worlds (2005) *** 1/2

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JAMIE HALL
 Available for Download at iTunes
 20 tracks - 74:34

Produced even earlier but released in 2005 (the same year as Spielberg's update of the H.G. Wells classic), this Pendragon Pictures direct-to-video release of *War of the Worlds* (one of three that appeared in 2005) intended to stay true to the novel, setting the action back in late 19th Century England. Apart from the B-movie budget and special effects issues, the film was plagued by a three (!)-hour running time. This is the first listed "feature" score by relative newcomer Jamie Hall, who studied with Hummie Mann. Hall's previous work is featured in the documentary series *About Us*.

Out of necessity, this is a low-budget score that makes use of high quality orchestral samples. If you accept the score on those terms, there is much to enjoy here. The opening "March of the Martians" features an excellent syncopated rhythmic drive and strong thematic writing. Hall is capable of writing memorable, lyric themes, and his love theme in particular is gorgeous. Some of the score's more horrific moments feature effective aleatoric clusters, and in "The Martians Come Out" Hall briefly throws in the effect of a large wordless chorus. In all, this is a diverse and rewarding listen despite the limitations of the score's electronic realization.

Hall's *War of the Worlds* is available for download exclusively at iTunes and represents a good sample of the score's near two-hour run time. —Steven A. Kennedy

Comments regarding this review can be sent to: stev4uth@hotmail.com.

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