

BRAM STOKER – Cold reading (Translated from German) in Babyblaue-Seiten

What an unconventional idea to call a band “Bram Stoker“. In connection with this name the term “Dracula” would inevitably occur at first, so you would probably not directly find this band when searching in the World Wide Web via Google. So was it an unfortunate choice? Well, when originally thinking about a band name the involved musicians certainly did not take into account how to be present in the web in the best way. Because the foundation goes back to the year 1969!

Now they suddenly re-appear, led by the two founding members Tony Bronsdon and Tony Lowe. The trio is completed by the newly added singer and drummer Will Hack. And what can I say - they play wonderful symphonic prog. When you're in the mood to listen to melody emphasized classic symphonic prog this is a perfect choice.

Tasteful keyboards, fine guitar playing and very pleasant singing – everything fits on this surprising comeback album. Let's take “fast decay” for example – an upbeat keyboard dominated song with a few classical excursions that sometimes remind me of Dutch formation Trace led by keyboardist Rick van der Linden. In general, the hallmark of the current Bram Stoker band is the outstanding keyboard playing, but also the guitar knows how to bring in fine accents.

The following song has some Camel feeling, but this time not referring to the Camel-typical guitar playing, but more regarding the overall atmosphere like on albums such as “Moonmadness”. Especially melody and vocals are reminding me of this. Even 70ies Genesis (in terms of guitar and keyboard work) can sometimes be heard.

But Bram Stoker are no copyists, instead they offer their own kind of feel-good symphonic prog. Though very obviously inspired by the 70s style, this is also working very well nowadays. It's never overloaded, sometimes even a bit mainstream-like. Especially some vocal arrangements occasionally sound a bit like Alan Parsons. If you prefer to listen to heavy or avant-garde stuff, this one is not for you. But if you're into melodic symphonic keyboard prog including some beautiful, catchy melodies – then this one is a perfect choice and you should grab it.

Since I'm in the mood to listen to exactly this kind of music right now, it's no surprise that my grading is very positive.

(12)

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